

AN
INQUIRY
INTO THE
ORIGINAL OF OUR IDEAS
OF
BEAUTY AND VIRTUE;

IN TWO TREATISES.

I. Concerning BEAUTY, ORDER,
HARMONY, DESIGN.

II. Concerning MORAL GOOD and EVIL.

By FRANCIS HUTCHESON, LL.D.

LATE PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN
THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

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Itaque eorum ipsorum quae aspectu sentiuntur, nullum aliud animal pulchritudinem, venustatem, convenientiam partium sentit. Quam similitudinem natura ratioque ab oculis ad animum transferens, multo etiam magis pulchritudinem, constantiam, ordinem in consiliis, factisque conservandum putat. Quibus ex rebus constat et efficitur id quod quaerimus honestum: quod etiam si nobilitatum non sit, tamen honestum sit: quodque etiam si à nullo laudetur, naturâ est laudabile. Formam quidem ipsam et tanquam faciem honesti vides, quae si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores excitaret sapientiae.

CICERO de Off. lib. i. c. 4.



TO
HIS EXCELLENCY
J O H N,
LORD CARTERET,
LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

WHEN I published these papers, I had so little confidence of their success, that I was unwilling to own them; and what I was unwilling myself to own, I durst not presume to inscribe to any great name.

Your Excellency's favourable reception of them, soon put me out of all fears about their success with the wiser and better part of the world; and since this has given me assurance to own them, I humbly presume to inscribe them in this second edition to your Excellency, that I may have at once an opportunity of expressing the sincerest gratitude for the notice you were pleased to take of me,

and have the pleasure also of letting the world know, that this small work has your Excellency's approbation.

The praise bestow'd by persons of real merit and discernment, is allowed by all to give a noble and rational pleasure. Your Excellency first made me feel this in the most lively manner; and it will be a pleasure as lasting as it is great: 'twill ever be matter of the highest joy and satisfaction to me that I am author of a book my Lord Carteret approves.

I know, my lord, that much of your commendation is to be attributed to your own humanity: you can intirely approve the works of those alone, who can think and speak on these subjects as justly as yourself; and that is what few, if any, even of those who spend their lives in such contemplations, are able to do. In the conversation, with which your Excellency has been pleased to honour me, I could not, I own, without the utmost surprize, observe so intimate an acquaint-

DEDICATION.

v

ance with the most valuable writings of contemplative men, antient and modern; so just a taste of what is excellent in the ingenious arts, in so young a man, amidst the hurry of an active life. Forgive me, My Lord, that mention this part of your character: 'tis so uncommon, that it deserves the highest admiration; and 'tis the only one which an obscure philosopher, who has received the greatest obligations from your Excellency, can with any propriety take notice of.

Those other great endowments which have enabled you, even in youth, to discharge the most difficult employments, with the highest honour to yourself, and advantage to your country, I dare not presume to describe. He who attempts to do justice to so great and good a character, ought himself to be one of uncommon merit and distinction: and yet the ablest panegyrist would find it difficult to add any thing to your Excel

vi DEDICATION-

lency's fame. The voices of nations proclaim your worth. I am,

May it please your Excellency,

Your most obliged,

Most obedient, and

Most devoted humble servant,

FRANCIS HUTCHESON.

DUBLIN, June 19. }
1725. }

P R E F A C E.

TH E R E is no part of philosophy of more importance, than a just knowledge of human nature, and its various powers and dispositions. Our late inquiries have been very much employed about our understanding, and the several methods of obtaining truth. We generally acknowledge, that the importance of any truth is nothing else than its moment, or efficacy to make men happy, or to give them the greatest and most lasting pleasure; and wisdom denotes only a capacity of pursuing this end by the best means. It must surely then be of the greatest importance, to have distinct conceptions of this end itself, as well as of the means necessary to obtain it; that we may find out which are the greatest and most lasting pleasures, and not employ our reason, after all our laborious improvements of it, in trifling pursuits. It is to be feared indeed, that most of our studies, without this inquiry, will be of very little use to us; for they seem to have scarce any other tendency than to lead us into speculative knowledge itself. Nor are we distinctly told how it is that knowledge or truth is pleasant to us.

This consideration put the author of the following papers upon inquiring into the various pleasures which human nature is capable of receiving. We shall gene-

rally find in our modern philosophic writings, nothing farther on this head, than some bare division of them into sensible, and rational, and some trite common-place arguments to prove the latter more valuable than the former. Our sensible pleasures are slightly passed over, and explained only by some instances in tastes, smells, sounds, or such-like, which men of any tolerable reflection generally look upon as very trifling satisfactions. Our rational pleasures have had much the same kind of treatment. We are seldom taught any other notion of rational pleasure than that which we have upon reflecting on our possession or claim to those objects, which may be occasions of pleasure. Such objects we call advantageous; but advantage, or interest, cannot be distinctly conceived, till we know what those pleasures are which advantageous objects are apt to excite; and what senses or powers of perception we have with respect to such objects. We may perhaps find such an inquiry of more importance in morals, to prove what we call the reality of virtue, or that it is the surest happiness of the agent, than one would at first imagine.

In reflecting upon our external senses, we plainly see, that our perceptions of pleasure or pain do not depend directly on our will. Objects do not please us, according as we incline they should. The presence of some objects necessarily pleases us, and the presence of others as necessarily displeases us. Nor can we, by our will, any otherwise procure pleasure, or avoid pain,

than by procuring the former kind of objects, and avoiding the latter. By the very frame of our nature the one is made the occasion of delight, and the other of dissatisfaction.

The same observation will hold in all our other pleasures and and pains. For there are many other sorts of objects, which please, or displease us as necessarily, as material objects do when they operate upon our organs of sense. There are few objects which are not thus constituted the necessary occasion of some pleasure or pain. Thus we find ourselves pleased with a regular form, a piece of architecture or painting, a composition of notes, a theorem, an action, an affection, a character. And we are conscious that this pleasure necessarily arises from the contemplation of the idea, which is then present to our minds, with all its circumstances, although some of these ideas have nothing of what we commonly call sensible perception in them; and in those which have, the pleasure arises from some uniformity, order, arrangement, imitation; and not from the simple ideas of colour, or sound, or mode of extension separately considered.

These determinations to be pleased with certain complex forms, the author chooses to call *Senses*; distinguishing them from the powers which commonly go by that name, by calling our power of perceiving the beauty of regularity, order, harmony, an *Internal Sense*; and that determination to approve affections, actions, or characters of rational agents, which we call

virtuous, he marks by the name of a *Moral Sense*.

His principal design is to shew, "That human nature was not left quite indifferent in the affair of virtue, to form to itself observations concerning the advantage, or disadvantage of actions, and accordingly to regulate its conduct." The weakness of our reason, and the avocations arising from the infirmities and necessities of our nature, are so great, that very few men could ever have formed those long deductions of reason, which shew some actions to be in the whole advantageous to the agent, and their contraries pernicious. The Author of nature has much better furnished us for a virtuous conduct, than some moralists seem to imagine, by almost as quick and powerful instructions, as we have for the preservation of our bodies. He has given us strong affections to be the springs of each virtuous action; and made virtue a lovely form, that we might easily distinguish it from its contrary, and be made happy by the pursuit of it.

This moral sense of beauty in actions and affections, may appear strange at first view. Some of our moralists themselves are offended at it in my Lord Shaftesbury; so much are they accustomed to deduce every approbation, or aversion, from rational views of private interest, (except it be merely in the simple ideas of the external senses) and have such a horror at innate ideas, which they imagine this borders upon. But this moral sense has no relation to innate ideas, as will appear in the second treatise.

Our gentlemen of good taste, can tell us of a great many senses, tastes, and relishes for beauty, harmony, imitation in painting and poetry; and may not we find too in mankind a relish for a beauty in characters, in manners? It will perhaps be found, that the greater part of the ingenious arts are calculated to please some natural powers, pretty different either from what we commonly call reason, or the external senses.

In the first treatise, the author perhaps in some instances has gone too far, in supposing a greater agreement of mankind in their sense of beauty, than experience will confirm; but all he is solicitous about is to shew, "That there is some sense of beauty natural to men; that we find as great an agreement of men in their relishes of forms, as in their external senses, which all agree to be natural; and that pleasure or pain, delight or aversion, are naturally joined to their perceptions." If the reader be convinced of this, it will be no difficult matter to apprehend another superior sense, natural also to men, determining them to be pleased with actions, characters, affections. This is the moral sense, which makes the subject of the second treatise.

The proper occasions of perception by the external senses, occur to us as soon as we come into the world; whence perhaps we easily look upon these senses to be natural: but the objects of the superior senses of beauty and virtue generally do not. It is probably some little time before children reflect, or at least let us know

that they reflect upon proportion and similitude; upon affections, characters, tempers; or come to know the external actions which are evidences of them. Hence we imagine that their sense of beauty, and their moral sentiments of actions, must be entirely owing to instruction and education; whereas it is as easy to conceive, how a character, a temper, as soon as they are observed, may be constituted by nature the necessary occasion of pleasure, or an object of approbation, as a taste or a sound; though these objects present themselves to our observation sooner than the other.

The first impression of these papers was so well received, that the author hopes it will be no offence to any who are concerned in the memory of the late Lord Viscount Molesworth, if he lets his readers know that he was the noble person mentioned in the preface to the first edition, and that their being published was owing to his approbation of them. It was from him he had that shrewd objection, which the reader may find in the first treatise*; besides many other remarks in the frequent conversations with which he honoured the author; by which that treatise was very much improved beyond what was in the draught presented to him. The author retains the most grateful sense of his singular civilities, and of the pleasure and improvement he received in his conversation; and is still fond of expressing his grateful remembrance of him: but,

“*Id cinerem, et manes credas curare sepultos?*”

* Sect. 5. art. 2. the last paragraph.

To be concerned in this book can be no honour to a person so justly celebrated for the most generous sentiments of virtue and religion, delivered with the most manly eloquence : yet it would not be just toward the world, should the author conceal his obligations to the reverend Mr. Edward Syng ; not only for revising these papers, when they stood in great need of an accurate review, but for suggesting several just amendments in the general scheme of morality. The author was much confirmed in his opinion of the justness of these thoughts, upon finding that this gentleman had fallen into the same way of thinking before him ; and will ever look upon his friendship as one of the greatest advantages and pleasures of his life.

To recommend the Lord Shaftesbury's writings to the world, is a very needless attempt. They will be esteemed while any reflection remains among men. It is indeed to be wished, that he had abstained from mixing, with such noble performances, some prejudices he had received against Christianity ; a religion which gives us the truest idea of virtue, and recommends the love of God, and of mankind, as the sum of all true religion. How would it have moved the indignation of that ingenious nobleman, to have found a dissolute set of men, who relish nothing in life but the lowest and most sordid pleasures, searching into his writings for those insinuations against Christianity, that they might be the less restrained from their debaucheries ; when at the same time their low minds are in-

capable of relishing those noble sentiments of virtue and honour, which he has placed in so lovely a light !

Whatever faults the ingenious may find with this performance, the author hopes no body will find any thing in it contrary to religion, or good manners : and he shall be well pleased, if he gives the learned world an occasion of examining more thoroughly these subjects, which are, he presumes, of very considerable importance. The chief ground of his assurance that his opinions in the main are just, is this, That as he took the first hints of them from some of the greatest writers of antiquity, so the more he has conversed with them, he finds his illustrations the more conformable to their sentiments.

In the later editions, what alterations are made, are partly owing to the objections of some gentlemen, who wrote very keenly against several principles in this book. The author was convinced of some inaccurate expressions, which are now altered ; and some arguments, he hopes, are now made clearer : but he has not yet seen cause to renounce any of the principles maintained in it. Nor is there any thing of consequence added, except in Sect. II. of Treatise II. and the same reasoning is found in Sect. I. of the Essay on the Passions.

In this fourth edition there are additions interspersed, to prevent objections which have been published against this scheme by several authors ; and some mathematical expressions are left out, which, upon second thoughts, appeared useless, and were disagreeable to some readers.

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AN
INQUIRY
INTO THE
ORIGINAL OF OUR IDEAS
OF
BEAUTY AND VIRTUE.
TREATISE I.

OF BEAUTY, ORDER, HARMONY, DESIGN.

SECT. I.

*Concerning some Powers of Perception, distinct from
what is generally understood by Sensation.*

TO make the following observations understood,
it may be necessary to premise some definitions,
and observations, either universally acknow-
ledged, or sufficiently proved by many writers both
antient and modern, concerning our perceptions called
sensations, and the actions of the mind consequent up-
on them.

Art. I. THOSE ideas which are rais'd
in the mind upon the presence of external *Sensation.*
objects, and their acting upon our bodies, are called

sensations. We find that the mind in such cases is passive, and has not power directly to prevent the perception or idea, or to vary it at its reception, as long as we continue our bodies in a state fit to be acted upon by the external object.

Different senses. II. WHEN two perceptions are intirely different from each other, or agree in nothing but the general idea of sensation, we call the powers of receiving those different perceptions, different senses. Thus seeing and hearing denote the different powers of receiving the ideas of colours and sounds. And although colours have great differences among themselves, as also have sounds; yet there is a greater agreement among the most opposite colours, than between any colour and a sound: hence we call all colours perceptions of the same sense. All the several senses seem to have their distinct organs, except feeling, which is in some degree diffused over the whole body.

The mind how active. III. THE mind has a power of compounding ideas, which were received separately; of comparing objects by means of the ideas, and of observing their relations and proportions; of enlarging and diminishing its ideas at pleasure, or in any certain ratio, or degree; and of considering separately each of the simple ideas, which might perhaps have been impressed jointly in the sensation. This last operation we commonly call abstraction.

IV. THE ideas of corporeal substances are compounded of the various simple ideas jointly impressed, when they presented themselves to our senses. We define substances only by enumerating these sensible ideas. And such definitions may raise a clear enough idea of the substance in the mind of one who never immediately perceiv'd the substance; provided he has separately received by his senses all the simple ideas which are in the composition of the complex one of the substance defined: but if there be any simple ideas which he has not received, or if he wants any of the senses necessary for the perception of them, no definition can raise any simple idea which has not been before perceiv'd by the senses.

V. HENCE it follows, "That when
" instruction, education, or prejudice of
" any kind, raise any desire or aversion
" toward an object, this desire or aversion must be
" founded upon an opinion of some perfection, or of
" some deficiency in those qualities, for perception of
" which we have the proper senses." Thus, if beauty
be desir'd by one who has not the sense of sight, the
desire must be rais'd by some apprehended regularity
of figure, sweetness of voice, smoothness, or softness,
or some other quality perceivable by the other senses,
without relation to the ideas of colour.

VI. MANY of our sensitive perceptions are pleasant and many painful, immediately, and that without any knowledge of the

Substances.

Education.

Instruction.

*Pleasure,
Pain.*

cause of this pleasure or pain, or how the objects excite it, or are the occasions of it; or without seeing to what farther advantage or detriment the use of such objects might tend: nor would the most accurate knowledge of these things vary either the pleasure or pain of the perception, however it might give a rational pleasure distinct from the sensible; or might raise a distinct joy, from a prospect of farther advantage in the object, or aversion, from an apprehension of evil.

Different VII. THE simple ideas raised in different persons by the same object, are probably some way different, when they disagree in their approbation or dislike; and in the same person, when his fancy at one time differs from what it was at another. This will appear from reflecting on those objects, to which we have now an aversion, tho' they were formerly agreeable: and we shall generally find that there is some accidental conjunction of a disagreeable idea, which always recurs with the object; as in those wines to which men acquire an aversion, after they have taken them in an emetic preparation, we are conscious that the idea is alter'd from what it was when that wine was agreeable, by the conjunction of the ideas of loathing and sickness of stomach. The like change of idea may be insensibly made by the change of our bodies as we advance in years, or when we are accustomed to any object, which may occasion an indifference toward meats we were fond of in our childhood; and may make some objects cease to raise the

disagreeable ideas, which they excited upon our first use of them. Many of our simple perceptions are disagreeable only through the too great intenseness of the quality: thus moderate light is agreeable, very strong light may be painful; moderate bitter may be pleasant, a higher degree may be offensive. A change in our organs will necessarily occasion a change in the intenseness of the perception at least; nay, sometimes will occasion a quite contrary perception: thus a warm hand shall feel that water cold, which a cold hand shall feel warm.

WE shall not find it perhaps so easy to account for the diversity of fancy about more complex ideas of objects, including many ideas of different senses at once; as some perceptions of those called primary qualities, and some secondary, as explained by Mr. Locke: for instance, in the different fancies about architecture, gardening, dress. Of the two former we shall offer something in sect. VI. As to dress, we may generally account for the diversity of fancies from a like conjunction of ideas: thus, if either from any thing in nature, or from the opinion of our country or acquaintance, the fancying of glaring colours be looked upon as an evidence of levity, or of any other evil quality of mind; or if any colour or fashion be commonly used by rustics, or by men of any disagreeable profession, employment, or temper; these additional ideas may recur constantly with that of the colour or fashion, and cause a constant dislike to them in those who join

the additional ideas, although the colour or form be no way disagreeable of themselves, and actually do please others who join no such ideas to them. But there appears no ground to believe such a diversity in human minds, as that the same simple idea or perception should give pleasure to one and pain to another, or to the same person at different times; not to say that it seems a contradiction, that the same simple idea should do so.

Complex ideas. VIII. THE only pleasure of sense, which many philosophers seem to consider, is that which accompanies the simple ideas of sensation: but there are far greater pleasures in those complex ideas of objects, which obtain the names of beautiful, regular, harmonious. Thus every one acknowledges he is more delighted with a fine face, a just picture, than with the view of any one colour, were it as strong and lively as possible; and more pleased with a prospect of the sun arising among settled clouds, and colouring their edges, with a starry hemisphere, a fine landskip, a regular building, than with a clear blue sky, a smooth sea, or a large open plain, not diversified by woods, hills, waters, buildings: and yet even these latter appearances are not quite simple. So in music, the pleasure of fine composition is incomparably greater than that of any one note, how sweet, full, or swelling soever.

Beauty. IX. LET it be observed, that in the following papers, the word *beauty* is taken for the

idea raised in us, and a sense of beauty for our power of receiving this idea. Harmony also denotes our pleasant ideas arising from composition of sounds, and a good ear (as it is generally taken) a power of perceiving this pleasure. In the following sections, an attempt is made to discover “ what “ is the immediate occasion of these pleasant ideas, or “ what real quality in the objects ordinarily excites “ them.”

X. IT is of no consequence whether we call these ideas of beauty and harmony, perceptions of the external senses of seeing and hearing, or not. I should rather choose to call our power of perceiving these ideas, an internal sense, were it only for the convenience of distinguishing them from other sensations of seeing and hearing, which men may have without perception of beauty and harmony. It is plain from experience, that many men have, in the common meaning, the senses of seeing and hearing perfect enough; they perceive all the simple ideas separately, and have their pleasures; they distinguish them from each other, such as one colour from another, either quite different, or the stronger or fainter of the same colour, when they are placed beside each other, although they may often confound their names when they occur apart from each other, as some do the names of green and blue: they can tell in separate notes the higher, lower, sharper or flatter, when separately sounded; in figures they discern the length,

*Harmony.**Internal sense.*

breadth, wideness of each line, surface, angle; and may be as capable of hearing and seeing at great distances as any men whatsoever: and yet perhaps they shall find no pleasure in musical compositions, in painting, architecture, natural landskip; or but a very weak one in comparison of what others enjoy from the same objects. This greater capacity of receiving such pleasant ideas we commonly call a fine genius or taste: in music we seem universally to acknowledge something like a distinct sense from the external one of hearing, and call it a good ear; and the like distinction we should probably acknowledge in other objects, had we also got distinct names to denote these powers of perception by.

*Different
from ex-
ternal.*

XI. WE generally imagine the brute animals endowed with the same sort of powers of perception as our external senses, and having sometimes greater acuteness in them: but we conceive few or none of them with any of these sublimer powers of perception here called internal senses; or at least if some of them have them, it is in a degree much inferior to ours.

There will appear another reason perhaps hereafter, for calling this power of perceiving the ideas of beauty, an internal sense, from this, that in some other affairs, where our external senses are not much concerned, we discern a sort of beauty, very like, in many respects, to that observed in sensible objects, and accompanied with like pleasure: such is that beauty per-

ceived in theorems, or universal truths, in general causes, and in some extensive principles of action.

XII. LET one consider, first, That it is probable a being may have the full power of external sensation, which we enjoy, so as to perceive each colour, line, surface, as we do; yet, without the power of comparing, or of discerning the similitudes or proportions: again, it might discern these also, and yet have no pleasure or delight accompanying these perceptions. The bare idea of the form is something separable from pleasure, as may appear from the different tastes of men about the beauty of forms, where we do not imagine that they differ in any ideas, either of the primary or secondary qualities. Similitude, proportion, analogy, or equality of proportion, are objects of the understanding, and must be actually known before we know the natural causes of our pleasure. But pleasure perhaps is not necessarily connected with the perception of them: and may be felt where the proportion is not known or attended to: and may not be felt where the proportion is observed. Since then there are such different powers of perception, where what are commonly called the external senses are the same; since the most accurate knowledge of what the external senses discover, may often not give the pleasure of beauty or harmony, which yet one of a good taste will enjoy at once without much knowledge; we may justly use another name for these higher and more delightful perceptions of beauty and harmony, and call the power of receiv-

ing such impressions, an internal sense: the difference of the perceptions seems sufficient to vindicate the use of a different name, especially when we are told in what meaning the word is applied.

*Its pleasures
necessary and
immediate.*

This superior power of perception is justly called a sense, because of its affinity to the other senses in this, that the pleasure is different from any knowledge of principles, proportions, causes, or of the usefulness of the object; we are struck at the first with the beauty: nor does the most accurate knowledge increase this pleasure of beauty, however it may superadd a distinct rational pleasure from prospects of advantage, or may bring along that peculiar kind of pleasure, which attends the increase of knowledge*.

XIII. AND farther, the ideas of beauty and harmony, like other sensible ideas, are necessarily pleasant to us, as well as immediately so; neither can any resolution of our own, nor any prospect of advantage or disadvantage, vary the beauty or deformity of an object: for as in the external sensations, no view of interest will make an object grateful, nor view of detriment, distinct from immediate pain in the perception, make it disagreeable to the sense; so propose the whole world as a reward, or threaten the greatest evil, to make us approve a deformed object, or disapprove a beautiful one; dissimulation may be procured by re-

* See above, art. 6.

wards or threatnings, or we may in external conduct abstain from any pursuit of the beautiful, and pursue the deform'd; but our sentiments of the forms, and our perceptions, would continue invariably the same.

XIV. HENCE it plainly appears, *This sense antecedent to, and distinct from prospects of interest.*
“ that some objects are immediately
“ the occasions of this pleasure of beauty, and that we have senses fitted
“ for perceiving it; and that it is distinct from that joy which arises upon prospect of advantage.” Nay, do not we often see convenience and use neglected to obtain beauty, without any other prospect of advantage in the beautiful form, than the suggesting the pleasant ideas of beauty? Now this shews us, that however we may pursue beautiful objects from self-love, with a view to obtain the pleasures of beauty, as in architecture, gardening, and many other affairs; yet there must be a sense of beauty, antecedent to prospects even of this advantage, without which sense these objects would not be thus advantageous, nor excite in us this pleasure which constitutes them advantageous. Our sense of beauty from objects, by which they are constituted good to us, is very distinct from our desire of them when they are thus constituted: our desire of beauty may be counter-balanced by rewards or threatnings, but never our sense of it; even as fear of death may make us desire a bitter potion, or neglect those meats which the sense of taste would recommend as pleasant;

but cannot make that potion agreeable to the sense, or meat disagreeable to it, which was not so antecedently to this prospect. The same holds true of the sense of beauty and harmony; that the pursuit of such objects is frequently neglected, from prospects of advantage, aversion to labour, or any other motive of interest, does not prove that we have no sense of beauty, but only that our desire of it may be counterbalanced by a stronger desire.

XV. HAD we no such sense of beauty and harmony, houses, gardens, dress, equipage, might have been recommended to us as convenient, fruitful, warm, easy; but never as beautiful: and yet nothing is more certain, than that all these objects are recommended under quite different views on many occasions: it is true, what chiefly pleases in the countenance, are the indications of moral dispositions; and yet were we by the longest acquaintance fully convinced of the best moral dispositions in any person, with that countenance we now think deform'd, this would never hinder our immediate dislike of the form, or our liking other forms more: and custom, education, or example, could never give us perceptions distinct from those of the senses which we had the use of before, or recommend objects under another conception than grateful to * them. But of the influence of custom, education, example, upon the sense of beauty, we shall treat below †.

* See art. 5.

† Sect. 7.

XVI. BEAUTY, in corporeal forms, is either original or comparative; or, if any like the terms better, absolute, or relative: only let it be observed, that by absolute or original beauty, is not understood any quality supposed to be in the object, which should of itself be beautiful, without relation to any mind which perceives it: for beauty, like other names of sensible ideas, properly denotes the perception of some mind; so cold, hot, sweet, bitter, denote the sensations in our minds, to which perhaps there is no resemblance in the objects, which excite these ideas in us, however we generally imagine otherwise. The ideas of beauty and harmony being excited upon our perception of some primary quality, and having relation to figure and time, may indeed have a nearer resemblance to objects, than these sensations, which seem not so much any pictures of objects, as modifications of the perceiving mind; and yet were there no mind with a sense of beauty to contemplate objects, I see not how they could be called beautiful. We therefore by * ab-

Beauty original or comparative.

* This division of beauty is taken from the different foundations of pleasure to our sense of it, rather than from the objects themselves: for most of the following instances of relative beauty have also absolute beauty; and many of the instances of absolute beauty, have also relative beauty in some respect or other. But we may distinctly consider these two foundations of pleasure; uniformity in the object itself, and resemblance to some original.

bsolute beauty understand only that beauty which we perceive in objects without comparison to any thing external, of which the object is supposed an imitation, or picture; such as that beauty perceived from the works of nature, artificial forms, figures. Comparative or relative beauty is that which we perceive in objects, commonly considered as imitations or resemblances of something else. These two kinds of beauty employ the three following sections.

S E C T. II.

Of Original or Absolute Beauty.

I. **S**INCE it is certain that we have ideas *Sense of*
of beauty and harmony, let us exa- *Men.*
mine what quality in objects excites these
ideas, or is the occasion of them. And let it be here
observed, that our inquiry is only about the qualities
which are beautiful to men; or about the foundation
of their sense of beauty: for, as was above hinted,
beauty has always relation to the sense of some mind;
and when we afterwards shew how generally the ob-
jects which occur to us are beautiful, we mean, that
such objects are agreeable to the sense of men: for
there are many objects which seem no way beautiful
to men, and yet other animals seem delighted with
them; they may have senses otherwise constituted
than those of men, and may have the ideas of beauty
excited by objects of a quite different form. We see
animals fitted for every place; and what to men ap-
pears rude and shapeless, or loathsome, may be to them
a paradise.

II. **T**HAT we may more distinctly discover the ge-
neral foundation or occasion of the ideas of beauty
among men, it will be necessary to consider it first in
its simpler kinds, such as occurs to us in regular figures;

and we may perhaps find that the same foundation extends to all the more complex species of it.

Uniformity III. THE figures which excite in us the ideas of beauty, seem to be those in which there is uniformity amidst variety. There are many conceptions of objects which are agreeable upon other accounts, such as grandeur, novelty, sanctity, and some others, which shall be mentioned hereafter*. But what we call beautiful in objects, to speak in the mathematical style, seems to be in a compound ratio of uniformity and variety: so that where the uniformity of bodies is equal, the beauty is as the variety; and where the variety is equal, the beauty is as the uniformity. This may seem probable, and hold pretty generally.

Variety. First, the variety increases the beauty in equal uniformity. The beauty of an equilateral triangle is less than that of the square; which is less than that of a pentagon; and this again is surpass'd by the hexagon. When indeed the number of sides is much increased, the proportion of them to the radius, or diameter of the figure, or of the circle, to which regular polygons have an obvious relation, is so much lost to our observation, that the beauty does not always increase with the number of sides; and the want of parallelism in the sides of heptagons, and other figures of odd numbers, may also diminish their beau-

* See Sect. vi. art. 11, 12, 13.

ty. So in solids, the eicosiedron surpasses the dodecaedron, and this the octaedron, which is still more beautiful than the cube; and this again surpasses the regular pyramid: the obvious ground of this, is greater variety with equal uniformity.

The greater uniformity increases the beauty amidst equal variety, in these *Uniformity.* instances: an equilateral triangle, or an even isosceles, surpasses the scalenum: a square surpasses the rhombus or lozenge, and this again the rhomboides, which is still more beautiful than the trapezium, or any figure with irregular curve sides. So the regular solids surpass all other solids of equal number of plain surfaces: and the same is observable not only in the five perfectly regular solids, but in all those which have any considerable uniformity, as cylinders, prisms, pyramids,obelisks; which please every eye more than any rude figures, where there is no unity or resemblance among the parts.

Compound ratio. Instances of the compound ratio we have in comparing circles or spheres, with ellipses or spheroids not very eccentric; and comparing the compound solids, the exoctaedron, and eicosidodecaedron, with the perfectly regular ones which they are compounded: and we shall find, that the want of that most perfect uniformity observable in the latter, is compensated by the greater variety in the former, so that the beauty is nearly equal.

IV. THESE observations would probably hold true

for the most part, and might be confirmed by the judgment of children in the simpler figures, where the variety is not too great for their comprehension. And however uncertain some of the particular aforesaid instances may seem, yet this is perpetually to be observed, that children are fond of all regular figures in their little diversions, altho' they be no more convenient, or useful for them, than the figures of our common pebbles: we see how early they discover a taste or sense of beauty, in desiring to see buildings, regular gardens, or even representations of them in pictures of any kind.

Beauty of nature. V. THE same foundation we have for our sense of beauty, in the works of nature. In

every part of the world which we call beautiful, there is a surprising uniformity amidst an almost infinite variety. Many parts of the universe seem not at all designed for the use of man; nay, it is but a very small spot with which we have any acquaintance. The figures and motions of the great bodies are not obvious to our senses, but found out by reasoning and reflection, upon many long observations: and yet as far as we can by sense discover, or by reasoning enlarge our knowledge, and extend our imagination, we generally find their structure, order, and motion, agreeable to our sense of beauty. Every particular object in nature does not indeed appear beautiful to us; but there is a great profusion of beauty over most of the objects which occur either to our senses, or reasonings upon observation.

for, not to mention the apparent situation of the heavenly bodies in the circumference of a great sphere, which is wholly occasioned by the imperfection of our sight in discerning distances; the forms of all the great bodies in the universe are nearly spherical; the orbits of their revolutions generally elliptic, and without great eccentricity, in those which continually occur to our observation: now these are figures of great uniformity, and therefore pleasing to us.

Further, to pass by the less obvious uniformity in the proportion of their quantities of matter, distances, times, of revolving, to each other; what can exhibit a greater instance of uniformity, amidst variety, than the constant tenor of revolutions in nearly equal times, in each planet, around its axis, and the central fire or sun, thro' all the ages of which we have any records, and in nearly the same orbit? Thus after certain periods, all the same appearances are again renew'd; the alternate successions of light and shade, or day and night, constantly pursuing each other around each planet, with an agreeable and regular diversity in the times they possess the several hemispheres, in the summer, harvest, winter, and spring; and the various phases, aspects, and situations, of the planets to each other, their conjunctions and oppositions, in which they suddenly darken each other with their conic shades in eclipses, are repeated to us at their fixed periods with invariable constancy: These are the beau-

tys which charm the astronomer, and make his tedious calculations pleasant.

*Molliter austerum studio fallente laborem.**

Earth.

VI. AGAIN, at to the dry part of the surface of our globe, a great part of which is covered with a very pleasant inoffensive colour, how beautifully is it diversified with various degrees of light and shade, according to the different situations of the parts of its surface, in mountains, valleys, hills, and open plains, which are variously inclined toward the great luminary!

Plants.

VII. If we descend to the minuter works of nature, what great uniformity among all the species of plants and vegetables in the manner of their growth and propagation! how near the resemblance among all the plants of the same species, whose numbers surpass our imagination! And this uniformity is not only observable in the form in gross; (nay, in this it is not so very exact in all instances) but in the structure of their minuter parts, even of those which no eye unassisted with glasses can discern. In the almost infinite multitude of leaves, fruit, seed, flowers of any one species, we often see a very great uniformity in the structure and situation of the smallest fibres. This is the beauty which charms an ingenious botanist. Nay, what great uniformity and regularity of figure is found in each particular plant, leaf, or flower.

* Hor. lib. ii. sat. 2. v. 12.

In all trees and most of the smaller plants, the stalks or trunks are either cylinders nearly, or regular prisms; the branches similar to their several trunks, arising at nearly regular distances, when no accidents retard their natural growth: in one species the branches arise in pairs on the opposite sides; the perpendicular plain of direction of the immediately superior pair, intersecting the plain of direction of the inferior, nearly at right angles: in another species, the branches spring singly and alternately, all around in nearly equal distances: and the branches in other species sprout all in knots around the trunk, one for each year. And in each species, all the branches in the first shoots preserve the same angles with their trunk; and they again sprout out into smaller branches exactly after the manner of their trunks. Nor ought we to pass over that great unity of colours which we often see in all the flowers of the same plant or tree, and often of a whole species; and their exact agreement in many shaded transitions into opposite colours, in which all the flowers of the same plant generally agree, nay, often all the flowers of a species.

VIII. AGAIN, as to the beauty of animals, either in their inward structure, which *Animals.* we come to the knowledge of by experiment and long observation, or their outward form, we shall find surprising uniformity among all the species which are known to us, in the structure of those parts, upon which life depends more immediately. And how amaz-

ing is the unity of mechanism, when we shall find an almost infinite diversity of motions, all their actions in walking, running, flying, swimming; all their serious efforts for self-preservation, all their freakish contortions when they are gay and sportful, in all their various limbs, perform'd by one simple contrivance of a contracting muscle, applied with inconceivable diversities to answer all these ends! various engines might have obtained the same ends; but then there had been less uniformity, and the beauty of our animal systems, and of particular animals, had been much less, when this surprizing unity of mechanism had been removed from them.

IX. AMONG animals of the same species, the unity is very obvious, and this resemblance is the very ground of our ranking them in such classes or species, notwithstanding the great diversities in bulk, colour, shape, which are observed even in those called of the same species. And then in each individual, how universal is that beauty which arises from the exact resemblance of all the external double members to each other, which seems the universal intention of nature, when no accident prevents it! We see the want of this resemblance never fails to pass for an imperfection, and want of beauty, tho' no other inconvenience ensues; as when the eyes are not exactly like, or one arm or leg is a little shorter or smaller than its fellow.

As to that most powerful beauty in countenances, airs, gestures, motion, we shall shew in the second

treatise *, that it arises from some imagined indication of morally good dispositions of mind. In motion there is also a natural beauty, when at fixed periods like gestures and steps are regularly repeated, suiting the time and air of music, which is observed in regular dancing.

X. THERE is a farther beauty in animals, arising from a certain proportion *Proportion.* of the various parts to each other, which still pleases the sense of spectators, though they cannot calculate it with the accuracy of a statuary. The statuary knows what proportion of each part of the face to the whole face is most agreeable, and can tell us the same of the proportion of the face to the body, or any parts of it; and between the diameters and lengths of each limb: When this proportion of the head to the body is remarkably altered, we shall have a giant or a dwarf. And hence it is, that either the one or the other may be represented to us even in miniature, without relation to any external object, by observing how the body surpasses the proportion it should have to the head in giants, and falls below it in dwarfs. There is a farther beauty arising from that figure, which is a natural indication of strength; but this may be passed over, because probably it may be alledged, that our approbation of this shape flows from an opinion of advantage, and not from the form itself.

The beauty arising from mechanism, apparently a-

* Section vi. art. 3.

dapted to the necessities and advantages of any animal ; which pleases us, even tho' there be no advantage to ourselves ensuing from it ; will be consider'd under the head of relative beauty, or design.*

Fowls. XI. THE peculiar beauty of fowls can scarce be omitted, which arises from the great variety of feathers, a curious sort of machines adapted to many admirable uses, which retain a considerable resemblance in their structure among all the species ; frequently a perfect uniformity in those of the same species in the corresponding parts, and in the two sides of each individual ; besides all the beauty of lively colours and gradual shades, not only in the external appearance of the fowl, resulting from an artful combination of shaded feathers, but often visible even in one feather separately.

Fluids. XII. IF our reasonings about the nature of fluids be just, the vast stores of water will give us an instance of uniformity in nature above imagination, when we reflect upon the almost infinite multitude of small, polished, smooth spheres, which must be supposed formed in all the parts of this globe. The same uniformity there is probably among the parts of other fluids as well as water ; and the like must be observed in several other natural bodies, as salts, sulphurs, and such like ; whose uniform properties do probably depend upon an uniformity in the figures of their parts.

* See section iv. art. 7.

Harmony. XIII. UNDER original beauty we may include harmony, or beauty of sound, if that expression can be allowed, because harmony is not usually conceiv'd as an imitation of any thing else. Harmony often raises pleasure in those who know not what is the occasion of it: and yet the foundation of this pleasure is known to be a sort of uniformity. When the several vibrations of one note regularly coincide with the vibrations of another, they make an agreeable composition; and such notes are called concords. Thus the vibrations of any one note coincide in time with two vibrations of its octave; and two vibrations of any note coincide with three of its fifth; and so on in the rest of the concords. Now no composition can be harmonious, in which the notes are not, for the most part, disposed according to these natural proportions. Besides which, a due regard must be had to the key, which governs the whole, and to the time and humour, in which the composition is begun: a frequent and inartificial change of any of which will produce the greatest, and most unnatural discord. This will appear, by observing the dissonance which would arise from tacking parts of different tunes together as one, altho' both were separately agreeable. A like uniformity is also observable among the bases, tenors, trebles of the same tune.

There is indeed observable, in the best compositions, a mysterious effect of discords: they often give as great pleasure as continued harmony; whether by re-

freshing the ear with variety, or by awakening the attention, and enlivening the relish for the succeeding harmony of concords, as shades enliven and beautify pictures, or by some other means not yet known : certain it is, however, that they have their place, and some good effect on our best compositions. Some other powers of music may be considered hereafter *.

XIV. BUT in all these instances of § beauty let it be observed, That the pleasure is communicated to those who never reflected on this general foundation; and that all here alledged is this, “ That the pleasant sensation arises only from objects, in which there is “ uniformity amidst variety :” we may have the sensation without knowing what is the occasion of it ; as a man’s taste may suggest ideas of sweets, acids, bitters, tho’ he be ignorant of the forms of the small bodies, or their motions, which excite these perceptions in him.

* See sect. vi. art. 12.

§ There is nothing singular in applying the word *beauty* to sounds. The antients observe the peculiar dignity of the senses of seeing and hearing, that in their objects we discern the καλόν, which we don’t ascribe to the objects of the other senses.

S E C T. III.

Of the Beauty of Theorems.

Theorems. I. **T**HE beauty of theorems, or universal truths demonstrated, deserves a distinct consideration, being of a nature pretty different from the former kinds of beauty; and yet there is none in which we shall see such an amazing variety with uniformity: and hence arises a very great pleasure distinct from prospects of any further advantage.

II. FOR in one theorem we may find included, with the most exact agreement, an infinite multitude of particular truths; nay, often a multitude of infinites: so that altho' the necessity of forming abstract ideas, and universal theorems, arises perhaps from the limitation of our minds, which cannot admit an infinite multitude of singular ideas or judgments at once, yet this power gives us an evidence of the largeness of the human capacity above our imagination. Thus, for instance, the 47th proposition of the first book of Euclid's Elements contains an infinite multitude of truths, concerning the infinite possible sizes of right-angled triangles, as you make the area greater or less; and in each of these sizes you may find an infinite multitude of dissimilar triangles, as you vary the proportion of the base

the perpendicular; all which infinites agree in the general theorem. In algebraic, and fluxional calculations, we shall find a like variety of particular truths included in general theorems; not only in general equations applicable to all kinds of quantity, but in more particular investigations of areas and tangents: in which one manner of operation shall discover theorems applicable to many orders or species of curves to the infinite sizes of each species, and to the infinite points of the innumerable individuals of each size.

III. THAT we may the better discern this agreement, or unity of an infinity of objects, in the general theorem, to be the foundation of the beauty or pleasure attending their discovery, let us compare our satisfaction in such discoveries, with the uneasy state of mind when we can only measure lines, or surfaces, by a scale, or are making experiments which we can reduce to no general canon, but are only heaping up a multitude of particular incoherent observations. Now each of these trials discovers a new truth, but with no pleasure or beauty, notwithstanding the variety, till we can discover some sort of unity, or reduce them to some general canon.

IV. AGAIN, let us take a metaphysical axiom, such as this, Every whole is greater than its part; and we shall find no beauty in the contemplation. For though this proposition contains many infinities of particular truths; yet the unity is inconsiderable, since they all agree only

Foundation of their beauty.

Little beauty in axioms.

in a vague, undetermined conception of whole and part, and in an indefinite excess of the former above the latter, which is sometimes great and sometimes small. So, should we hear that the cylinder is greater than the inscribed sphere, and this again greater than the cone of the same altitude, and diameter of the base, we shall find no pleasure in this knowledge of a general relation of greater and less, without any precise difference or proportion. But when we see the universal exact agreement of all possible sizes of such systems of solids, that they preserve to each other the constant ratio of 3, 2, 1; how beautiful is the theorem, and how are we ravished with its first discovery!

We may likewise observe, that easy or obvious propositions, even where the unity is sufficiently distinct and determinate, do not please us so much as those, which being less obvious, give us some surprize in the discovery: thus we find little pleasure in discovering, That a line bisecting the vertical angle of an isosceles triangle, bisects the base, or the reverse; or that equilateral triangles are equiangular. These truths we almost know intuitively, without demonstration: they are like common goods, or those which men have long possessed, which do not give such sensible joys as much smaller new additions may give us. But let none hence imagine, that the sole pleasure of theorems is from surprize; for the same novelty of a single experiment does not please us much: nor ought we to conclude from the greater

Easy theorems.

pleasure accompanying a new, or unexpected advantage, that surprize, or novelty, is the only pleasure of life, or the only ground of delight in truth. Another kind of surprize in certain theorems increases our pleasure above that we have in theorems of greater extent; when we discover a general truth, which upon some confused notion we had reputed false: as that asymptotes always approaching should never meet the curve. This is like the joy of unexpected advantage where we dreaded evil. But still the unity of many particulars in the general theorem is necessary to give pleasure in any theorem.

Corollaries. V. THERE is another beauty in propositions, when one theorem contains a great multitude of corollaries easily deducible from it. Thus there are some leading, or fundamental properties upon which a long series of theorems can be naturally built: such a theorem is the 35th of the 1st book of Euclid, from which the whole art of measuring right-lined areas is deduced, by resolution into triangles, which are the halves of so many parallelograms; and these are each respectively equal to so many rectangles of the base into the perpendicular altitude: the 47th of the 1st book is another of like beauty, and so are many others, in higher parts of geometry. In the search of nature there is the like beauty in the knowledge of some great principles, or universal forces, from which innumerable effects do flow. Such is gravitation, in Sir Isaac Newton's scheme. What is the

aim of our ingenious geometers? A continual inlargement of theorems, or making them extensive, shewing how what was formerly known of one figure extends to many others, to figures very unlike the former in appearance.

It is easy to see how men are charmed with the beauty of such knowledge, besides its usefulness; and how this sets them upon deducing the properties of each figure from one genesis, and demonstrating the mechanic forces from one theorem of the composition of motion; even after they have sufficient knowledge and certainty in all these truths from distinct independent demonstrations. And this pleasure we enjoy even when we have no prospect of obtaining any other advantage from such manner of deduction, than the immediate pleasure of contemplating the beauty: nor could love of fame excite us to such regular methods of deduction, were we not conscious that mankind are pleased with them immediately, by this internal sense of their beauty.

It is no less easy to see into what absurd attempts men have been led by this sense of *Fantastic beauty.* beauty, and an affectation of obtaining it in the other sciences as well as the mathematics. It was this probably which set Descartes on that hopeful project of deducing all human knowledge from one proposition, viz. "Cogito, ergo sum;" while others pleaded, that "Impossibile est idem simul esse et non esse," had much fairer pretensions to the style and title of "Prin-

"cipium humanæ cognitionis absolutè primum." Mr. Leibnitz had an equal affection for his favourite principle of a sufficient reason for every thing in nature, and boasts of the wonders he had wrought in the intellectual world by its assistance. If we look into particular sciences, we see the inconveniences of this love of uniformity. How awkwardly does Puffendorf deduce the several duties of men to God, themselves, and their neighbours, from his single fundamental principle of sociableness to the whole race of mankind? This observation is a strong proof, that men perceive the beauty of uniformity in the sciences, since they are led into unnatural deductions by pursuing it too far.

VI. THIS delight which accompanies sciences, or universal theorems, may really be called a kind of sensation; since it necessarily accompanies the discovery of any proposition, and is distinct from bare knowledge itself*, being most violent at first, whereas the knowledge is uniformly the same. And however knowledge enlarges the mind, and makes us more capable of comprehensive views and projects in some kinds of busi-

* Aristotle (*Ethic. Nicom. l. 10. c. 3.*) justly observes, that we have certain natural propensities to certain actions, or to the exercise of certain natural powers, without a view to, or intention of, obtaining those pleasures which naturally accompany them. *Περὶ πολλὰ σπουδὴν ποιοισαίμεθα ἂν, ἢ εἰ μηδεμίαν ἐπιφέρῃ ἡδονήν, οἷον ὄρεῖν, μνημονεύειν, εἰδέναι, τὰς ἀρετὰς ἔχειν· οἱ δ' ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἔπυνται τούτοις ἡδοναί, ὅθεν διαφέρει· ἐλοίμεθα γὰρ ἂν ταῦτα, ἢ εἰ μὴ γένοιτ' ἂν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἡδονή.*

ness, whence advantage may also arise to us; yet we may leave it in the breast of every student to determine, whether he has not often felt this pleasure without any such prospect of advantage from the discovery of his theorem. All which can thence be inferred is only this, that as in our external senses, so in our internal ones, the pleasant sensations generally arise from those objects which calm reason would have recommended, had we understood their use, and which might have engaged our pursuits from self-interest.

VII. As to the works of art, were we to run through the various artificial contrivances or structures, we should constantly find

*Works
of art.*

the foundation of the beauty which appears in them, to be some kind of uniformity, or unity of proportion among the parts, and of each part to the whole. As there is a great diversity of proportions possible, and different kinds of uniformity, so there is room enough for that diversity of fancies observable in architecture, gardening, and such-like arts in different nations; they all may have uniformity, though the parts in one may differ from those in another. The Chinese or Persian buildings are not like the Grecian and Roman, and yet the former has its uniformity of the various parts to each other, and to the whole, as well as the latter. In that kind of architecture which the Europeans call regular, the uniformity of parts is very obvious, the several parts are regular figures, and either equal or similar at least in the same range; the pedestals are pa-

rallelopipedons, or square prisms; the pillars, cylinders nearly; the arches circular, and all those in the same row equal; there is the same proportion every where observed in the same range between the diameters of pillars and their heights, their capitals, the diameters of arches, the heights of the pedestals, the projections of the cornice, and all the ornaments in each of our five orders. And tho' other countrys do not follow the Grecian or Roman proportions; yet there is even among them a proportion retained, a uniformity, and resemblance of corresponding figures; and every deviation in one part from the proportion which is observed in the rest of the building, is displeasing to every eye, and destroys or diminishes at least the beauty of the whole.

VIII. THE same might be observed thro' all other works of art, even to the meanest utensil; the beauty of every one of which we shall always find to have the same foundation of uniformity amidst variety, without which they appear mean, irregular, and deformed.

S E C T. IV.

Of Relative or Comparative Beauty.

I. IF the preceding thoughts concerning the foundation of absolute beauty be just, we may easily understand wherein relative beauty consists. All beauty is relative to the sense of some mind perceiving it; but what we call relative is that which is apprehended in any object, commonly considered as an imitation of some original: and this beauty is founded on a conformity, or a kind of unity between the original and the copy. The original may be either some object in nature, or some established idea; for if there be any known idea as a standard, and rules to fix this image or idea by, we may make a beautiful imitation. Thus a statuary, painter, or poet, may please us with an Hercules, if his piece retains that grandeur, and those marks of strength and courage, which we imagine in that hero.

And farther, to obtain comparative beauty alone, it is not necessary that there be any beauty in the original; the imitation of absolute beauty may indeed in the whole make a more lovely piece, and yet an exact imitation shall still be beautiful, though the original were entirely void of it: thus the deformity of old age in a picture, the rudest rocks or mountains in a landscape, if well represented, shall have abundant beau-

ty, though perhaps not so great as if the original were absolutely beautiful, and as well represented: nay, perhaps the novelty may make us prefer the representation of irregularity.

Description in poetry. II. THE same observation holds true in the descriptions of the poets either of natural objects or persons; and this relative beauty is what they should principally endeavour to obtain, as the peculiar beauty of their works. By the *moratae fabulae*, or the *ἠθῆ* of Aristotle, we are not to understand virtuous manners, but a just representation of manners or characters as they are in nature; and that the actions and sentiments be suited to the characters of the persons to whom they are ascribed in epic and dramatic poetry. Perhaps very good reasons may be suggested from the nature of our passions, to prove that a poet should not draw his characters perfectly virtuous; these characters indeed, abstractly considered, might give more pleasure, and have more beauty than the imperfect ones which occur in life with a mixture of good and evil: but it may suffice at present to suggest against this choice, that we have more lively ideas of imperfect men with all their passions, than of morally perfect heroes, such as really never occur to our observation; and of which consequently we cannot judge exactly as to their agreement with the copy. And farther, thro' consciousness of our own state, we are more nearly touched and affected by the imperfect characters; since

in them we see represented, in the persons of others, the contrasts of inclinations, and the struggles between the passions of self-love and those of honour and virtue, which we often feel in our own breasts. This is the perfection of beauty for which Homer is justly admired, as well as for the variety of his characters.

*Probabili-
ty, simile,
metaphor.* III. MANY other beautys of poetry may be reduced under this class of relative beauty: the probability is absolutely necessary to make us imagine resemblance; it is by resemblance that the similitudes, metaphors and allegorys are made beautiful, whether either the subject or the thing compared to it have beauty or not; the beauty indeed is greater, when both have some original beauty or dignity as well as resemblance: and this is the foundation of the rule of studying decency in metaphors and similes as well as likeness. The measures and cadence are instances of harmony, and come under the head of absolute beauty.

*Proneness
to compare.* IV. WE may here observe a strange proneness in our minds to make perpetual comparisons of all things which occur to our observation, even of those which are very different from each other. There are certain resemblances in the motions of all animals upon like passions, which easily found a comparison; but this does not serve to entertain our fancy: inanimate objects have often such positions as resemble those of the human body in various circumstances; these airs or gestures of the body

are indications of certain dispositions in the mind, so that our very passions and affections, as well as other circumstances, obtain a resemblance to natural inanimate objects. Thus a tempest at sea is often an emblem of wrath; a plant or tree drooping under the rain, of a person in sorrow; a poppy bending its stalk, or a flower withering when cut by the plow, resembles the death of a blooming hero; an aged oak in the mountains shall represent an old empire, a flame seizing a wood shall represent a war. In short, every thing in nature, by our strange inclination to resemblance, shall be brought to represent other things, even the most remote, especially the passions and circumstances of human nature in which we are more nearly concerned; and to confirm this, and furnish instances of it, one need only look into Homer or Virgil. A fruitful fancy would find in a grove or a wood, an emblem of every character in a commonwealth, and every turn of temper, or station in life.

Intention. V. CONCERNING that kind of comparative beauty which has a necessary relation to some established idea, we may observe, that some works of art acquire a distinct beauty by their correspondence to some universally supposed intention in the artificer, or the persons who employed him: and to obtain this beauty, sometimes they do not form their works so as to attain the highest perfection of original beauty separately considered; because a composition of this relative beauty, along with some degree of the

original kind, may give more pleasure, than a more perfect original beauty separately. Thus we see, that strict regularity in laying out of gardens in parterres, vistas, parallel walks, is often neglected, to obtain an imitation of nature even in some of its wildnesses. And we are more pleased with this imitation, especially when the scene is large and spacious, than with the more confined exactness of regular works. So likewise in the monuments erected in honour of deceased heroes, altho' a cylinder, or prism or regular solid, may have more original beauty than a very acute pyramid or obelisk, yet the latter pleases more, by answering better the supposed intentions of stability, and being conspicuous. For the same reason cubes, or square prisms, are generally chosen for the pedestals of statues, and not any of the more beautiful solids, which do not seem so secure from rolling. This may be the reason too, why columns or pillars look best when made a little taper from the middle or a third from the bottom, that they may not seem top-heavy, and in danger of falling.

VI. THE like reason may influence artists, in many other instances, to depart from the rules of original beauty, as above laid down. And yet this is no argument against our sense of beauty being founded, as was above explained, on uniformity amidst variety, but only an evidence, that our sense of beauty of the original kind may be varied and over-balanced by another kind of beauty.

VII. This beauty arising from correspondence to intention, would open to curious observers a new scene of beauty in the works of nature, by considering how the mechanism of the various parts known to us, seems adapted to the perfection of that part, and yet in subordination to the good of some system or whole. We generally suppose the good of the greatest whole, or of all beings, to have been the intention of the Author of nature; and cannot avoid being pleased when we see any part of this design executed in the systems we are acquainted with. The observations already made on this subject are in every one's hand, in the treatises of our late improvers of mechanical philosophy. We shall only observe here, that every one has a certain pleasure in seeing any design well executed by curious mechanism, even when his own advantage is no way concerned; and also in discovering the design to which any complex machine is adapted, when he has perhaps had a general knowledge of the machine before, without seeing its correspondence or aptness to execute any design.

The arguments by which we prove reason and design in any cause from the beauty of the effects, are so frequently used in some of the highest subjects, that it may be necessary to inquire a little more particularly into them, to see how far they will hold, and with what degree of evidence. *

* It is surprising to see the ingenious author of *Alciphron*

S E C T. V.

Concerning our reasonings about Design and Wisdom in the Cause, from the Beauty or Regularity of Effects.

I. **T**H E R E seems to be no necessary connection of our pleasing ideas of beauty with the uniformity or regularity of the objects, from the nature of things, antecedent to some constitution of the Author of our nature, which has made such forms pleasant to us. *Sense, arbitrary in its author.*

alleging, that all beauty observed is solely some use perceived or imagined; for no other reason than this, that the apprehension of the use intended, occurs continually, when we are judging of the forms of chairs, doors, tables, and some other things of obvious use; and that we like those forms most, which are fittest for the use. Whereas we see, that in these very things similitude of parts is regarded, where unlike parts would be equally useful: thus the feet of a chair would be of the same use, tho' unlike, were they equally long; tho' one were strait, and the other bended; or one bending outwards, and the other inwards: a coffin-shape for a door would bear a more manifest aptitude to the human shape, than that which artists require. And then what is the use of these imitations of nature, or of its works, in architecture? Why should a pillar please which has some of the human proportions? Is the end or use of a pillar the same as of a man? Why the imitation of other natural or well-proportioned things in the entablature? Is there then a sense of imitation, relishing

ther minds may be so framed as to receive no pleasure from uniformity; and we actually find, that the same regular forms seem not equally to please all the animals known to us, as shall probably appear hereafter. Therefore let us make what is the most unfavourable supposition to the present argument, viz. That the constitution of our sense so as to approve uniformity, is merely arbitrary in the Author of our nature; and that there are an infinity of tastes or relishes of beauty possible; so that it would be impossible to throw together fifty or a hundred pebbles, which should not make an agreeable habitation for some animal or other, and

it where there is no other use than this, that it naturally pleases? Again; is no man pleased with the shapes of any animals, but those which he expects use from? The shapes of the horse or the ox may promise use to the owner; but is he the only person who relishes the beauty? And is there no beauty discerned in plants, in flowers, in animals, whose use is to us unknown? But what is still more surprising, is his representing Aristotle as giving the ἐπαινετὸν, for the notion of the καλόν: when he has so often told us, "that the καλόν is prior to it; " that we love praise from others, as it gives testimony to, and " confirms our opinion of, our being possessed of virtue, or the " καλόν; and that the superior excellency of this, which we " antecedently perceive, is the reason why we love praise." See *Ethic ad Nicom.* lib. i c. 5. and often elsewhere. It is true, that the καλόν is laudable, and, as Plato asserts, all-wise, ἡδύ, & ἀφελιμον, at last; and so does every one maintain who asserts a moral sense, in that very assertion. And yet the doctor has found out the art of making this an objection to a moral sense.

appear beautiful to it. And then it is plain, that from the perception of beauty in any one effect, we should have no reason to conclude design in the cause: for a sense might be so constituted as to be pleased with each irregularity as may be the effect of an undirected force *. But then, as there are an infinity of forms possible into which any system may be reduced, an infinity of places in which animals may be situated, and an infinity of relishes or senses in these animals is supposed possible; that in the immense spaces any one animal should by chance be placed in a system agreeable to its taste, must be improbable as infinite to one at least: and much more unreasonable is it to expect from chance, that a multitude of animals agreeing in

* By undirected force, or undesigning force, is to be understood, That force with which an agent may put matter into motion, without having any design or intention to produce any particular form. The *conatus ad motum*, without an actual line of direction, seems such a gross absurdity in the Cartesian scheme, that it is below our notice. But men have so many confused notions of some nature, or chance impressing motions without any design or intention of producing any particular effect, that it may be useful to shew, that even this very absurd *postulatum*, tho' it were granted them, is insufficient to answer the appearances in the regularity of the world: and this is what is attempted in the first fourteen articles of this section. These arguments would really be useless, if all men were persuaded of what, to a man of just thought, will appear pretty obvious, that there can be no thoughtless agent; and that chance and nature are mere empty names, as they are used on this occasion, relative only to our ignorance.

their sense of beauty should obtain agreeable places.

II. THERE is also the same probability, that in any one system of matter an undirected force will produce a regular form, as any one given irregular one, of the same degree of complication : but still the irregular forms into which any system may be ranged, surpass in multitude the regular, as infinite does unity ; for what holds in one small system, will hold in a thousand, a million, a universe, with more advantage, viz. that the irregular forms possible infinitely surpass the regular. For instance, the area of an inch square is capable of an infinity of regular forms, the equilateral triangle, the square, the pentagon, hexagon, heptagon, &c. but for each one regular form, there are an infinity of irregular, as an infinity of scalena for the one equilateral triangle, an infinity of trapezia for the one square, of irregular pentagons for the one regular, and so on : and therefore supposing any one system agitated by undesigning force, it is infinitely more probable that it will resolve itself into an irregular form, than a regular. Thus, that a system of six parts upon agitation shall not obtain the form of a regular hexagon, is at least infinite to unity ; and the more complex we make the system, the greater is the hazard, from a very obvious reason.

We see this confirmed by our constant experience, that regularity never arises from any undesigning force of ours ; and from this we conclude, that where-ever

there is any regularity in the disposition of a system capable of many other dispositions, there must have been design in the cause; and the force of this evidence increases, according to the multiplicity of parts employed.

But this conclusion is too rash, unless some farther proof be introduced; and what leads us into it is this. Men, who have a sense of beauty in regularity, are led generally in all their arrangements of bodies to study some kind of regularity, and seldom ever design irregularity: hence we judge the same of other beings too, viz. that they study regularity; and presume upon intention in the cause where-ever we see it, making irregularity always a presumption of want of design: whereas if other agents have different senses of beauty, or if they have no sense of it at all, irregularity may as well be designed as regularity. And then let it be observed, that in this case there is just the same reason to conclude design in the cause from any one irregular effect, as from a regular one: for since there are an infinity of other forms possible as well as this irregular one produced; and since to such a being * void of a sense of beauty, all forms are as to its own relish indifferent, and all agitated matter meeting must make some form or other, and all forms, upon supposition

* There is a great difference between such a being as is here mentioned, and a being which has no intention for any reason whatsoever to produce one form more than another. This latter sort of being, as to the present argument, would be the same with chance, but not the former. For tho' a being

that the force is applied by an agent void of a sense of beauty, would equally prove design ; it is plain that no one form proves it more than another, or can prove it at all ; except from a general metaphysical consideration, that there is no proper agent without design and intention, and that every effect flows from the intention of some cause.

*Similar forms
by chance im-
possible.*

III. THIS however follows from the above mentioned considerations, that supposing a mass of matter surpassing a cubic inch, as infinite of the first power does unity, and that this whole mass were some way determined from its own nature without any design in a cause (which perhaps is scarce possible) to resolve itself into parts whose solid contents were each a cubic inch, and into a prismatic form whose base should always be $\frac{1}{2}$ of a square inch ; suppose these conditions determined, and all others left to undirected force ; all which we could expect from undirected force in this

has no sense of beauty he may notwithstanding be capable of design, and of intention to produce regular forms ; and the observation of greater regularity in any number of effects, than could be expected from undirected force, is a presumption of design and intention in the cause, even where the cause is supposed to have no sense of beauty in such forms, since perhaps he may have other reasons moving him to chuse such forms. Thus, supposing the Deity not immediately pleased with regularity, uniformity, or similarity in bodies, yet there may be reasons moving him to produce such objects, such as the pleasing his creatures, having given them a sense of beauty founded on these qualitys. See the two last paragraphs of the last section.

case would be one equilateral prism, or two perhaps : because there are an infinity of irregular prisms possible of the same base, and solid content ; and when we met with many such prisms, we must probably conclude them produced by design, since they are more than could have been expected by the laws of hazard.

IV. BUT if this infinite mass was not determined to a prismatic form, we could only expect from its casual concurrence one prism of any kind, since there is an infinity of other solids into which the mass might be resolved ; and if we found any great number of prisms, we should have reason to presume design : so that in a mass of matter as infinite of the first power, we could not from any concurrence or agitation expect with any good ground a body of any given dimensions or size, and of any given form ; since of any dimension there are infinite forms possible, and of any form there are an infinity of dimensions ; and if we found several bodies of the same dimension and form, we should have so much presumption for design.

V. THERE is one trifling objection which may perhaps arise from the chrySTALLIZING of certain bodies, when the fluid is evaporated in which they were swimming : for in this we frequently see regular forms arising, tho' there is nothing supposed in this affair but an undirected force of attraction. But to remove this objection, we need only consider, that we have good reason to believe, that the smallest particles of chrySTALLIZED bodies have fixed regular forms given them in

the constitution of nature; and then it is easy to conceive how their attractions may produce regular forms: but unless we suppose some preceding regularity in the figures of attracting bodies, they can never form any regular body at all. And hence we see how improbable it is, that the whole mass of matter, not only in this globe, but in all the fixed stars known to us by our eyes or glasses, were they a thousand times larger than our astronomers suppose, could in any concurrence have produced any number of similar bodies regular or irregular.

Combinations by chance impossible.

VI. AND let it be here observed, that there are many compositions of bodies which the smallest degree of design could easily effect, which yet we would in vain expect from all the powers of chance or undesigned force, after an infinity of rencounters; even supposing a dissolution of every form except the regular one, that the parts might be prepared for a new agitation. Thus supposing we could expect one equilateral prism of any given dimensions should be formed from undirected force, in an infinity of matter some way determined to resolve itself into bodies of a given solid content, (which is all we could expect, since it is infinite to one after the solid content is obtained, that the body shall not be prismatical; and allowing it prismatical, it is infinite to one that it shall not be equilateral :) and again, supposing another infinity of matter determined to resolve itself into tubes, of orifices exactly equal to the bases of the

former prisms, it is again at least as the second power of infinite to unity, that not one of these tubes shall be both prismatic and equiangular; and then if the tube were thus formed, so as to be exactly capable of receiving one of the prisms, and no more, it is infinite to one that they shall never meet in infinite space; and should they meet, it is infinite to one that the axes of the prism and tube shall never happen in the same strait line; and supposing they did, it is again as infinite to three, that angle shall not meet angle, so as to enter. We see then how infinitely improbable it is, "That all the powers of chance in infinite matter, agitated through infinite ages, could ever effect this small composition of a prism entering a prismatic bore; and, that all our hazard for it would at most be but as three is to the third power of infinite." And yet the smallest design could easily effect it.

VII. MAY we not then justly count it altogether absurd, and next to an absolute strict impossibility, "That all the powers of undirected force should ever effect such a complex machine as the most imperfect plant, or the meanest animal, even in one instance?" For the improbability just increases, as the complication of mechanism in these natural bodies surpasses that simple combination above-mentioned.

VIII. LET it be here observed, "That the preceding reasoning from the frequency of regular bodies of one form in the universe, and from the combinations of various bodies, is intirely independent

“ on any perception of beauty ; and would equally
“ prove design in the cause, although there were no
“ being which perceived beauty in any form whatso-
“ ever :” for it is in short this, “ That the recurring
“ of any effect oftener than the laws of hazard deter-
“ mine, gives presumption of design ; and, that com-
“ binations which no undesigned force could give us
“ reason to expect, must necessarily prove the same ;
“ and that with superior probability, as the multitude
“ of cases in which the contrary might happen, sur-
“ pass all the cases in which this could happen :”
which appears to be in the simplest cases at least as in-
finite does to unity. And the frequency of similar irre-
gular forms, or exact combinations of them, is an e-
qual argument of design in the cause, since the simila-
rity, or exact combinations of irregular forms, are as
little to be expected from all the powers of undirected
force, as any sort whatsoever.

IX. To bring this nearer to something like a theo-
rem, although the idea of infinite be troublesome enough
to manage in reasoning : the powers of chance, with in-
finite matter in infinite ages, may answer hazards as the
fifth power of infinite, and no more : thus the quanti-
ty of matter may be conceived as the third power of
infinite, and no more, the various degrees of force may
make another power of infinite, and the number of
rencounters may make the fifth. But this last only
holds on supposition, that after every rencounter there
is no cohesion, but all is dissolved again for a new com-

course, except in similar forms or exact combinations; which supposition is intirely groundless, since we see dissimilar bodies cohering as strongly as any, and rude masses more than any combinations. Now to produce any given body, in a given place or situation, and of given dimensions, or shape, the hazards of the contrary are, one power of infinite at least to obtain the place or situation; when the situation is obtained, the solid content requires another power of infinite to obtain it; the situation and solidity obtained require, for accomplishing the simplest given shape, at least the other three powers of infinite. For instance, let the shape be a four-sided prism or parallelopiped; that the surfaces should be planes requires one power; that they should be parallel in this case, or inclined in any given angle in any other case, requires another power of infinite; and that they should be in any given ratio to each other, requires at least the third power: for in each of these heads there is still an infinity at least of other cases possible beside the one given. So that all the powers of chance could only produce perhaps one body of every simpler shape or size at most, and this is all we could expect: we might expect one pyramid, or cube, or prism perhaps; but when we increase the conditions required, the prospect must grow more improbable, as in more complex figures, and in all combinations of bodies, and in similar species, which we never could reasonably hope from chance; and therefore where we see them, we must certainly ascribe them to design.

*Combinations
of irregular
forms, equally
impossible.*

X. THE combinations of regular forms, or of irregular ones exactly adapted to each other, require such vast powers of infinite to effect them, and the hazards of the contrary forms are so infinitely numerous, that all probability or possibility of their being accomplished by chance seems quite to vanish. Let us apply the cases in Art. vi. of this section about the prism and tube, to our simplest machines, such as a pair of wheels of our ordinary carriages; each circular, spokes equal in length, thickness, shape; the wheels set parallel, the axle-tree fixed in the nave of both, and secured from coming out at either end: now the cases in which the contrary might have happened from undirected concourses, were there no more required than what is just now mentioned, must amount in multitude to a power of infinite equal to every circumstance required. What shall we say then of a plant, a tree, an animal, a man, with such multitudes of adapted vessels, such articulations, insertions of muscles, diffusion of veins, arteries, nerves? The improbability that such machines should be the effect of chance, must be near the infinitesimal power of infinite to unity.

XI. FURTHER, were all the former reasoning from similarity of forms and combinations groundless, and could chance give us ground to expect such forms, with exact combination, yet we could only promise ourselves one of these forms among an infinity of others.

When we see then such a multitude of individuals of a species, similar to each other in a great number of parts; and when we see in each individual, the corresponding members so exactly like each other, what possible room is there left for questioning design in the universe? None but the barest possibility against an inconceivably great probability, surpassing every thing which is not strict demonstration.

XII. *THIS* argument, as has been already observed*, is quite abstracted from any sense of beauty in any particular form; for the exact similarity of a hundred or a thousand trapezia, proves design as well as the similarity of squares, since both are equally above all the powers of undirected force or chance, as the hundredth or thousandth power of infinite surpasses unity; and what is above the powers of chance, must give us proportionable presumption for design.

Thus, allowing that a leg, or arm, or eye, might have been the effect of chance, (which was shewn to be most absurd, and next to absolute impossible) that it should not have a corresponding leg, arm, eye, exactly similar, must be a hazard of a power of infinite proportioned to the complication of parts; for in proportion to this is the multitude of cases increased, in which it would not have a corresponding member similar: so that allowing twenty or thirty parts in such a structure, it would be as the twentieth or thirtieth power

* See above, art. 8.

of infinite to unity, that the corresponding part should not be similar. What shall we say then of the similar forms of a whole species?

Gross similarity XIII. If it be objected, "That
by chance, impos- "natural bodies are not exactly si-
sible. "milar, but only grossly so to our
 "senses; as that a vein, an artery,
 "a bone is not perhaps exactly similar to its corre-
 "spondent in the same animal, though it appears so
 "to our senses, which judge only of the bulk, and do
 "not discern the small constituent parts; and that in
 "the several individuals of a species the dissimilarity is
 "always sensible, often in the internal structure, and
 "always in the external appearance:" To remove
 this objection it will be sufficient to shew, "That the
 "multitude of cases wherein sensible dissimilitude could
 "have happened are still infinitely more than all the
 "cases in which sensible similitude might be retained:"
 so that the same reasoning holds from sensible similari-
 ty, as from the mathematically exact: and again,
 "That the cases of gross dissimilarity do in the same
 "manner surpass the cases of gross similarity possible,
 "as infinite does one."

XIV. To prove both these assertions, let us con-
 sider a simple instance. Suppose a trapezium of a foot
 square in area should appear grossly similar to another,
 while no one side differs, by $\frac{1}{10}$ of an inch; or no
 angle in one surpasses the corresponding one in the other
 above ten minutes: now this tenth of an inch is infinitely

divisible, as are also the ten minutes, so that the cases of insensible dissimilarity under apparent similarity are really infinite. But then it is also plain that there are an infinity of different sensibly dissimilar trapezia, even of the same area, according as we vary a side by one-tenth, two-tenths, three-tenths, and so on, and vary the angles and another side so as to keep the area equal. Now in each of these infinite degrees of sensible dissimilitude the several tenths are infinitely divisible as well as in the first case; so that the multitude of sensible dissimilarities are to the multitude of insensible dissimilarities under apparent resemblance, still as the second power of infinite to the first, or as infinite to unity. And then how vastly greater must the multitude be, of all possible sensible dissimilarities in such complex bodies as legs, arms, eyes, arteries, veins, skeletons?

XV. As to the dissimilarities of animals of the same species, it is in the same manner plain, that the possible cases of gross dissimilarity are infinite; and then every case of gross dissimilarity contains also all the cases of insensible dissimilarity. Thus, if we would count all animals of a species grossly similar, while there was no limb which in length or diameter did exceed the ordinary shape by a above a third of the head; it is plain that there are an infinity of sensibly different gross dissimilarities possible, and then in each of these cases of gross dissimilarity, there are an infinity of cases of nicer dissimilarity, since $\frac{1}{3}$ of the head may be infinitely divided. To take a low but easy instance; two

cockle-shells which fitted each other naturally, may have an infinity of insensible differences, but still there are an infinity of possible sensible differences; and then in any one of the sensibly different forms, there may be the same infinity of insensible differences beside the sensible one: so that still the hazard for even gross similarity from chance is infinite to one, and this always increases by a power of infinite for every distinct member of the animal, in which even gross similarity is retained; since the addition of every member or part to a complex machine, makes a new infinity of cases, in which sensible dissimilarity may happen; and this infinity combined with the infinite cases of the former parts, raises the hazard by a power of infinite.

Now this may sufficiently shew us the absurdity of the Cartesian or Epicurean hypothesis, even granting their postulatam of undirected force impressed on infinite matter; and seems almost a demonstration of design in the universe.

XVI. ONE objection more remains to be removed, viz. "That some imagine, this argument may hold
 " better *à priori* than *à posteriori*; that is, we have
 " better reason to believe, when we see a cause about
 " to act, without knowledge, that he will not attain
 " any given, or desired end; than we have on the
 " other hand to believe, when we see the end actually
 " attained, that he acted with knowledge: thus, say
 " they, when a particular person is about to draw a
 " ticket in a lottery, where there is but one prize to a

“ thousand blanks, it is highly probable that he shall
“ draw a blank ; but suppose we have seen him actu-
“ ally draw for himself the prize, we have no ground
“ to conclude that he had a knowledge or art to ac-
“ complish this end.” But the answer is obvious: in
such contrivances we generally have, from the very cir-
cumstances of the lottery, very strong moral argu-
ments, which almost demonstrate that art can have no
place ; so that a probability of a thousand to one, may
not surmount those arguments: but let the probabili-
ty be increased, and it will soon surmount all arguments
to the contrary. For instance, if we saw a man ten
times successively draw prizes, in a lottery where there
were but ten prizes to ten thousand blanks, I fancy few
would question whether he us’d art or not : much less
would we imagine it were chance, if we saw a man
draw for his own gain successively a hundred, or a
thousand prizes, from among a proportionably greater
number of blanks. Now in the works of nature the
case is intirely different: we have not the least argu-
ment against art or design. An intelligent cause is sure-
ly at least as probable a notion as chance, general force,
conatus ad motum, or the *clinamen principiorum*, to
account for any effect whatsoever: and then all the
regularity, combinations, similiarities of species, are so
many demonstrations, that there was design and intel-
ligence in the cause of this universe: whereas in fair
lotteries, all art in drawing is made, if not actually
impossible, at least highly improbable.

Irregularity
does not prove
want of design.

XVII. LET it be here observed also, "That a rational agent may be capable of impressing force without intending to produce any particular form, and of designedly producing irregular or dissimilar forms, as well as regular and similar:" and hence it follows, "That although all the regularity, combination and similarity in the universe, are presumptions of design, yet irregularity is no presumption of the contrary; unless we suppose that the agent is determined from a sense of beauty always to act regularly, and delight in similarity; and that he can have no other inconsistent motive of action:" which last is plainly absurd. We do not want in the universe many effects which seem to have been left to the general laws of motion upon some great impulse, and have many instances where similarity has been plainly designed in some respects, and probably neglected in others; or even dissimilarity designed. Thus we see the general exact resemblance between the two eyes of most persons; and yet perhaps no other third eye in the world is exactly like them. We see a gross conformity of shape in all persons in innumerable parts, and yet no two individuals of any species are undistinguishable; which perhaps is intended for valuable purposes to the whole species.

Wisdom,
prudence.

XVIII. HITHERTO the proof amounts only to design or intention, barely, in opposition to blind force or chance; and we

see the proof of this is independent on the arbitrary constitution of our internal sense of beauty. Beauty is often supposed an argument of more than design, to wit, wisdom and prudence in the cause. Let us inquire also into this.

Wisdom denotes the pursuing of the best ends by the best means; and therefore, before we can from any effect prove the cause to be wise, we must know what is best to the cause or agent. Among men who have pleasure in contemplating uniformity, the beauty of effects is an argument of wisdom, because this is good to them; but the same argument would not hold as to a being void of this sense of beauty. And therefore the beauty apparent to us in nature, will not of itself prove wisdom in the cause, unless this cause or Author of nature be supposed benevolent; and then indeed the happiness of mankind is desirable or good to the Supreme Cause; and that form which pleases us, is an argument of his wisdom. And the strength of this argument is increased always in proportion to the degree of beauty produced in nature, and exposed to the view of any rational agents; since upon supposition of a benevolent Deity, all the apparent beauty produced is an evidence of the execution of a benevolent design, to give them the pleasures of beauty.

But what more immediately proves wisdom is this; when we see any machine with a great complication of parts actually obtaining an end, we justly conclude, That since this could not have been the effect of

“ chance, it must have been intended for that end,
 “ which is obtained by it ;” and then the ends or intentions being in part known, the complication of organs, and their nice disposition adapted to this end, is an evidence, “ of a comprehensive large understanding in the cause, according to the multiplicity of
 “ parts, and the appositeness of their structure, even
 “ when we do not know the intention of the whole.”

*General
 causes.*

XIX. THERE is another kind of beauty from which we conclude wisdom in the cause, as well as design, when we see many useful or beautiful effects flowing from one general cause. There is a very good reason for this conclusion among men. Interest must lead beings of limited powers, who are incapable of a great diversity of operations, and distracted by them, to choose this frugal oeconomy of their forces, and to look upon such management as an evidence of wisdom in other beings like themselves. Nor is this speculative reason all which influences them ; for even beside this consideration of interest, they are determined by a sense of beauty, where that reason does not hold ; as when we are judging of the productions of other agents about whose oeconomy we are not solicitous. Thus, who does not approve of it as a perfection in clock-work, that three or four motions of the hour, minute, and second hands, and monthly plate, should arise from one spring or weight, rather than from three or four springs or weights, in a very compound machine, which should perform the same

effects, and answer all the same purposes with equal exactness? Now the foundation of this beauty plainly appears to be an uniformity, or unity of cause amidst diversity of effects.

XX. WE shall * hereafter offer some reasons, why the Author of nature may choose to operate in this manner by general laws and universal extensive causes, although the reason just now mentioned does not hold with an Almighty Being. This is certain, that we have some of the most delightful instances of universal causes in the works of nature, and that the most studious men in these subjects are so delighted with the observation of them, that they always look upon them as evidences of wisdom in the administration of nature, from a sense of beauty.

General laws.

XXI. THE wonderfully simple mechanism which performs all animal motions, was mentioned † already; nor is that of the inanimate parts of nature, less admirable. How innumerable are the effects of that one principle of heat, derived to us from the sun, which is not only delightful to our sight and feeling, and the means of discerning objects, but is the cause of rains, springs, rivers, winds, and the universal cause of vegetation! The uniform principle of gravity preserves at once the planets in their orbits, gives cohesion to the parts of each globe, and stability to mountains, hills,

* See the last section.

† See above, sect. ii. art. 8.

and artificial structures; it raises the sea in tides, and sinks them again, and restrains them in their channels; it drains the earth of its superfluous moisture, by rivers; it raises the vapours by its influence on the air, and brings them down again in rains; it gives an uniform pressure to our atmosphere, necessary to our bodies in general, and more especially to inspiration in breathing; and furnishes us with an universal movement, capable of being applied in innumerable engines. How incomparably more beautiful is this structure, than if we supposed so many distinct volitions in the Deity, producing every particular effect, and preventing some of the accidental evils which casually flow from the general law! We may rashly imagine that this latter manner of operation might have been more useful to us; and it would have been no distraction to Omnipotence: but then the great beauty had been lost, and there had been no more pleasure in the contemplation of this scene, which is now so delightful. One would rather choose to run the hazard of its casual evils, than part with that harmonious form, which has been an unexhausted source of delight to the successive spectators in all ages.

Miracles. XXII. HENCE we see, “ That how-
 “ ever miracles may prove the superinten-
 “ dency of a voluntary agent, and that the universe is
 “ not guided by necessity or fate, yet that mind must
 “ be weak and inadvertent, which needs them to con-
 “ firm the belief of a wise and good Deity; since the

“ deviation from general laws, unless upon very ex-
 “ traordinary occasions, must be a presumption of in-
 “ constancy and weakness, rather than of steady wis-
 “ dom and power, and must weaken the best argu-
 “ ments we can have for the sagacity and power of the
 “ universal mind.”

S E C T. VI.

Of the Universality of the Sense of Beauty among men.

Internal sense I. **W**E before * insinuated, “ That
not an imme- “ all beauty has a relation
diate source “ to some perceiving power;” and con-
of pain. frequently since we know not how great
 a variety of senses there may be among

animals, there is no form in nature concerning which we can pronounce, “ That it has no beauty;” for it may still please some perceiving power. But our inquiry is confined to men; and before we examine the universality of this sense of beauty, or their agreement in approving uniformity, it may be proper to consider, “ Whether, as the other senses which give us pleasure, do also give us pain, so this sense of beauty does make some objects disagreeable to us, and the occasion of pain.”

That many objects give no pleasure to our sense is obvious; many are certainly void of beauty: but then there is no form which seems necessarily disagreeable of itself, when we dread no other evil from it, and compare it with nothing better of the kind. Many objects are naturally displeasing, and distasteful to our

* See above sect. i. art. 17. sect. iv. art. 1.

external senses, as well as others pleasing and agreeable; as smells, tastes, and some separate sounds: but as to our sense of beauty, no composition of objects which give not unpleasant simple ideas, seems positively unpleasant or painful of itself, had we never observed any thing better of the kind. Deformity is only the absence of beauty, or deficiency in the beauty expected in any species: thus bad music pleases rustics who never heard any better, and the finest ear is not offended with tuning of instruments, if it be not too tedious, where no harmony is expected; and yet much smaller dissonancy shall offend amidst the performance, where harmony is expected. A rude heap of stones is no way offensive to one who shall be displeased with irregularity in architecture, where beauty was expected. And had there been a species of that form which we now call ugly or deformed, and had we never seen or expected greater beauty, we should have received no disgust from it, although the pleasure would not have been so great in this form as in those we now admire. Our sense of beauty seems designed to give us positive pleasure, but not a positive pain or disgust, any farther than what arises from disappointment.

II. THERE are indeed many faces which at first view are apt to raise dislike; but this is generally not from any deformity which of itself is positively displeasing, but either from want of expected beauty, or much more from their carrying some natu-

*Approbation and
dislike from asso-
ciations of ideas.*

ral indications of morally bad dispositions, which we all acquire a faculty of discerning in countenances, airs, and gestures. That this is not occasioned by any form positively disgusting, will appear from this, that if upon long acquaintance we are sure of finding sweetness of temper, humanity and chearfulness, although the bodily form continues, it shall give us no disgust or displeasure; whereas, if any thing were naturally disagreeable, or the occasion of pain, or positive distaste, it would always continue so, even although the aversion we might have toward it were counterbalanced by other considerations. There are horrors raised by some objects, which are only the effect of fear for ourselves, or compassion towards others, when either reason, or some foolish association of ideas, makes us apprehend danger, and not the effect of any thing in the form itself: for we find that most of those objects which excite horror at first, when experience or reason has removed the fear, may become the occasions of pleasure; as ravenous beasts, a tempestuous sea, a craggy precipice, a dark shady valley.

III. We shall see * hereafter, “That *Associations*. “ associations of ideas make objects pleasant and delightful, which are not naturally apt to give any such pleasures; and the same way, the casual conjunctions of ideas may give a disgust, where there is nothing disagreeable in the form itself.”

* See below art. 11, 12. of this section.

And this is the occasion of many fantastic aversions to figures of some animals, and to some other forms: thus swine, serpents of all kinds, and some insects really beautiful enough, are beheld with aversion by many people, who have got some accidental ideas associated to them. And for distastes of this kind, no other account can be given.

IV. But as to the universal agreement of mankind in their sense of beauty from uniformity amidst variety, we must consult *Universality of this sense.*

experience: and as we allow all men reason, since all men are capable of understanding simple arguments, though few are capable of complex demonstrations; so in this case it must be sufficient to prove this sense of beauty universal, "If all men are better pleased with uniformity in the simpler instances than the contrary, even when there is no advantage observed attending it; and likewise if all men, according as their capacity enlarges, so as to receive and compare more complex ideas, have a greater delight in uniformity, and are pleased with its more complex kinds, both original and relative."

Now let us consider if ever any person was void of this sense in the simpler instances. Few trials have been made in the simplest instances of harmony, because, as soon as we find an ear incapable of relishing complex compositions, such as our tunes are, no farther pains are employed about such. But in figures, did ever any man make choice of a trapezium, or any irregular

curve, for the ichnography or plan of his house, without necessity, or some great motive of convenience? or to make the opposite walls not parallel, or unequal in height? Were ever trapeziums, irregular polygons or curves chosen for the forms of doors or windows, though these figures might have answered the uses as well, and would have often saved a great part of the time, labour and expence to workmen, which is now employed in suiting the stones and timber to the regular forms? Among all the fantastic modes of dress, none was ever quite void of uniformity, if it were only in the resemblance of the two sides of the same robe, and in some general aptitude to the human form. The Pictish painting had always relative beauty, by resemblance to other objects, and often those objects were originally beautiful: however justly we might here apply Horace's censure of impertinent descriptions in poetry,

“ Sed non erat his locus——*.

But never were any so extravagant as to affect such figures as are made by the casual spilling of liquid colours. Who was ever pleased with an inequality of heights in windows of the same range, or dissimilar shapes of them? with unequal legs or arms, eyes or cheeks in a mistress? It must however be acknowledged, “ That interest may often counterbalance our

* Hor. de Arte Poet. v. 19.

“ sense of beauty, in this affair as well as in others,
 “ and superior good qualities may make us overlook
 “ such imperfections.”

V. NAY farther, it may perhaps appear, “ That regularity and uniformity
 “ are so copiously diffused through the *Real beauty alone pleases.*
 “ universe, and we are so readily determined to pursue this as the foundation of beauty in works of art, that there is scarcely any thing ever fancied as beautiful, where there is not really something of this uniformity and regularity.” We are indeed often mistaken in imagining that there is the greatest possible beauty, where it is but very imperfect; but still it is some degree of beauty which pleases, although there may be higher degrees which we do not observe; and our sense acts with full regularity when we are pleased, although we are kept by a false prejudice from pursuing objects which would please us more.

A Goth, for instance, is mistaken, when from education he imagines the architecture of his country to be the most perfect: and a conjunction of some hostile ideas, may make him have an aversion to Roman buildings, and study to demolish them, as some of our reformers did the popish buildings, not being able to separate the ideas of the superstitious worship from the forms of the buildings where it was practised: and yet it is still real beauty which pleases the Goth, founded upon uniformity amidst variety. For the Gothic pillars are uniform to each other, not only in their sec-

tions, which are lozenge-formed; but also in their heights and ornaments: their arches are not one uniform curve, but yet they are segments of similar curves, and generally equal in the same ranges. The very Indian buildings have some kind of uniformity, and many of the eastern nations, though they differ much from us, yet have great regularity in their manner, as well as the Romans in theirs. Our Indian screens, which wonderfully supply our imaginations with ideas of deformity, in which nature is very churlish and sparing, do want indeed all the beauty arising from proportion of parts, and conformity to nature; and yet they cannot divest themselves of all beauty and uniformity in the separate parts: and this diversifying the human body into various contortions, may give some wild pleasure from variety, since some uniformity to the human shape is still retained.

*History pleases
in like manner.*

VI. THERE is one sort of beauty which might perhaps have been better mentioned before, but will not be impertinent here, because the taste or relish of it is universal in all nations, and with the young as well as the old, and that is the beauty of history. Every one knows how dull a study it is to read over a collection of gazettes, which shall perhaps relate all the same events with the historian: the superior pleasure then of history must arise, like that of poetry, from the manners; when we see a character well drawn, wherein we find the secret causes of a great di-

versity of seemingly inconsistent actions; or an interest of state laid open, or an artful view nicely unfolded, the execution of which influences very different and opposite actions as the circumstances may alter. Now this reduces the whole to an unity of design at least: and this may be observed in the very fables which entertain children, otherwise we cannot make them relish them.

VII. WHAT has been said will probably be assented to, if we always remember in our inquiries into the universality of the sense of beauty, "That there may be real beauty, where there is not the greatest; and that there are an infinity of different forms which may all have some unity, and yet differ from each other." So that men may have different fancies of beauty, and yet uniformity be the universal foundation of our approbation of any form whatsoever as beautiful. And we shall find that it is so in the architecture, gardening, dress, equipage, and furniture of houses, even among the most uncultivated nations; where uniformity still pleases, without any other advantage than the pleasure of the contemplation of it.

VIII. IT will deserve our consideration on this subject, how, in like cases, we form very different judgments concerning the internal and external senses. Nothing is more ordinary among those, who after Mr. Locke have rejected innate ideas, than to alledge, "That all our relish for beauty and

Diversity of judgments concerning our senses.

“ order, is either from prospect of advantage, custom, “ or education,” for no other reason but the variety of fancies in the world : and from this they conclude, “ That our fancies do not arise from any natural power “ of perception, or sense.” And yet all allow our external senses to be natural, and that the pleasures or pains of their sensations, however they may be increased or diminished by custom or education, and counterbalanced by interest, yet are really antecedent to custom, habit, education, or prospect of interest. Now it is certain, “ That there is at least as great a “ variety of fancies about their objects, as the objects “ of beauty :” nay, it is much more difficult, and perhaps impossible, to bring the fancies or relishes of the external senses to any general foundation at all, or to find any rule for the agreeable or disagreeable : and yet we all allow, “ that these are natural powers of perception.”

*The reason
of it.*

IX. The reason of this different judgment can be no other than this, that we have got distinct names for the external senses, and none, or very few, for the internal ; and by this are led, as in many other cases, to look upon the former as some way more fixed, and real, and natural, than the latter. The sense of harmony has got its name, viz. a good ear ; and we are generally brought to acknowledge this a natural power of perception, or a sense some way distinct from hearing : now it is certain, “ That there is as necessary a perception

“ of beauty upon the presence of regular objects, as of
“ harmony upon hearing certain sounds.”

X. But let it be observed here once for all, “ That an internal sense no more
“ presupposes an innate idea, or prin-
“ ciple of knowledge, than the exter-
“ nal.” Both are natural powers of per-
ception, or determinations of the mind to receive ne-
cessarily certain ideas from the presence of objects.
The internal sense is, a passive power of receiving ideas
of beauty from all objects in which there is uniformity
amidst variety. Nor does there seem any thing more
difficult in this matter, than that the mind should be
always determined to receive the idea of sweet, when
particles of such a form enter the pores of the tongue ;
or to have the idea of sound upon any quick undula-
tion of the air. The one seems to have as little con-
nection with its idea, as the other : and the same power
could with equal ease constitute the former the occa-
sion of ideas, as the latter.

*An internal
sense does not
presuppose in-
nate ideas.*

XI. THE association of ideas * above
hinted at, is one great cause of the ap-
parent diversity of fancies in the sense of
beauty, as well as in the external senses ;
and often makes men have an aversion to objects of
beauty, and a liking to others void of it, but under
different conceptions than those of beauty or deformi-

*Associations
cause of dis-
agreement.*

* See above art. 3. of this section.

ty. And here it may not be improper to give some instances of some of these associations. The beauty of trees, their cool shades, and their aptness to conceal from observation, have made groves and woods the usual retreat to those who love solitude, especially to the religious, the pensive, the melancholy, and the amorous. And do not we find that we have so joined the ideas of these dispositions of mind with those external objects, that they always recur to us along with them? The cunning of the heathen priests might make such obscure places the scene of the fictitious appearances of their deities; and hence we join ideas of something divine to them. We know the like effect in the ideas of our churches, from the perpetual use of them only in religious exercises. The faint light in Gothic buildings has had the same association of a very foreign idea, which our poet shews in his epithet,

————— “A dim religious light*.

In like manner it is known, that often all the circumstances of actions, or places, or dresses of persons, or voice, or song, which have occurred at any time together, when we were strongly affected by any passion, will be so connected that any one of these will make all the rest recur. And this is often the occasion both of great pleasure and pain, delight and aversion to many objects, which of themselves might have been per-

* *Milt. Il Penseroso.*

fectly indifferent to us: but these approbations, or distastes, are remote from the ideas of beauty, being plainly different ideas.

XII. THERE is also another charm in music to various persons, which is distinct from the harmony, and is occasioned by its raising agreeable passions. *Music, how it pleases differently.*

The human voice is obviously varied by all the stronger passions; now, when our ear discerns any resemblance between the air of a tune, whether sung or played upon an instrument, either in its time, or modulation, or any other circumstance, to the sound of the human voice, in any passion, we shall be touched by it in a very sensible manner, and have melancholy, joy, gravity, thoughtfulness, excited in us by a sort of sympathy or contagion. The same connexion is observable between the very air of a tune, and the words expressing any passion which we have heard it fitted to, so that they shall both recur to us together, though but one of them affects our senses.

Now in such a diversity of pleasing or displeasing ideas, which may be joined with forms of bodies, or tunes, when men are of such different dispositions, and prone to such a variety of passions, it is no wonder, "that they should often disagree in their fancies of objects, even although their sense of beauty and harmony were perfectly uniform;" because many other ideas may either please or displease, according to persons tempers, and past circumstances. We know

how agreeable a very wild country may be to any person who has spent the chearful days of his youth in it, and how disagreeable very beautiful places may be, if they were the scenes of his misery. And this may help us in many cases to account for the diversities of fancy, without denying the uniformity of our internal sense of beauty.

XIII. GRANDEUR and novelty are two ideas different from beauty, which often recommend objects to us. The reason of this is foreign to the present subject. See Spectator, N^o 412.

S E C T. VII.

Of the power of Custom, Education, and Example, as to our internal Senses.

I. **C**USTOM, education, and example are so often alledged in this affair, as the occasion of our relish for beautiful objects, and for our approbation of, or delight in, a certain conduct in life in a moral species, that it is necessary to examine these three particularly, to make it appear, “that there is a natural power of perception, or sense of beauty in objects, antecedent to all custom, education, or example.”

II. **C**USTOM, as distinct from the other two, operates in this manner. As *Custom gives no new sense.* to actions, it only gives a disposition to the mind or body more easily to perform those actions which have been frequently repeated; but never leads us to apprehend them under any other view, than what we were capable of apprehending them under at first; nor gives us any new power of perception about them. We are naturally capable of sentiments of fear, and dread of any powerful presence; and so custom may connect the ideas of religious horror to certain buildings: but custom could never have made a being naturally incapable of fear, receive such ideas. So, had we no other power of perceiving, or forming ideas of actions, but as they were advantageous or disadvanta-

geous, custom could only have made us more ready at perceiving the advantage or disadvantage of actions. But this is not to our present purpose.

As to our approbation of, or delight in external objects; when the blood or spirits, of which anatomists talk, are roused, quickened, or fermented as they call it, in any agreeable manner, by medicine or nutriment; or any glands frequently stimulated to secretion; it is certain, that to preserve the body easy, we shall delight in objects of taste, which of themselves are not immediately pleasant to it, if they promote that agreeable state, which the body had been accustomed to. Farther, custom will so alter the state of the body, that what at first raised uneasy sensations, will cease to do so, or perhaps raise another agreeable idea of the same sense; but custom can never give us any idea of a sense different from those we had antecedent to it: it will never make the blind approve objects as coloured, or those who have no taste approve meats as delicious, however they might approve them as strengthening or exhilarating. Were our glands, and the parts about them, void of feeling, did we perceive no pleasure from certain brisker motions in the blood, custom could never make stimulating or intoxicating fluids or medicines agreeable, when they were not so to the taste: so, by like reasoning, had we no natural sense of beauty from uniformity, custom could never have made us imagine any beauty in objects; if we had had no ear, custom could never have given us the plea-

tures of harmony. When we have these natural senses antecedently, custom may make us capable of extending our views farther, and of receiving more complex ideas of beauty in bodies, or harmony in sounds, by increasing our attention, and quickness of perception. But however custom may increase our power of receiving or comparing complex ideas, yet it seems rather to weaken than strengthen the ideas of beauty, or the impressions of pleasure from regular objects; else how is it possible that any person could go into the open air on a sunny day, or clear evening, without the most extravagant raptures, such as Milton * represents our ancestor in, upon his first creation? For such any person would certainly fall into, upon the first representation of such a scene.

Custom in like manner may make it easier for any person to discern the use of a complex machine, and approve it as advantageous; but he would never have imagined it beautiful, had he no natural sense of beauty. Custom may make us quicker in apprehending the truth of complex theorems, but we all find the pleasure or beauty of theorems as strong at first as ever. Custom makes us more capable of retaining and comparing complex ideas, so as to discern more complicated uniformity, which escapes the observation of novices in any art; but all this presupposes a natural sense of beauty in uniformity: for, had there been nothing

* See *Paradise Lost*, Book 8.

in forms, which was constituted the necessary occasion of pleasure to our senses, no repetition of indifferent ideas as to pleasure or pain, beauty or deformity, could ever have made them grow pleasing or displeasing.

Nor education. III. THE effect of education is this,

that thereby we receive many speculative opinions, which are sometimes true, and sometimes false; and are often led to believe, that objects may be naturally apt to give pleasure or pain to our external senses, which in reality have no such qualities. And farther, by education there are some strong associations of ideas without any reason, by mere accident sometimes, as well as by design, which it is very hard for us ever after to break asunder. Thus aversions are raised to darkness, and to many kinds of meat, and to certain innocent actions: approbations without ground are raised in like manner. But in all these instances, education never makes us apprehend any qualities in objects, which we have not naturally senses capable of perceiving. We know what sickness of the stomach is, and may without ground believe, that very healthful meats will raise this; we by our sight and smell receive disagreeable ideas of the food of swine, and their styes, and perhaps cannot prevent the recurring of these ideas at table: but never were men naturally blind prejudiced against objects as of a disagreeable colour, or in favour of others as of a beautiful colour; they perhaps hear men dispraise one colour, and may imagine this colour to be some quite different sensible

quality of the other senses, but that is all. And the same way, a man naturally void of taste could by no education receive the ideas of taste, or be prejudiced in favour of meats as delicious: so, had we no natural sense of beauty and harmony, we could never be prejudiced in favour of objects or sounds as beautiful or harmonious. Education may make an unattentive Goth imagine that his countrymen have attained the perfection of architecture; and an aversion to their enemies the Romans, may have joined some disagreeable ideas to their very buildings, and excited them to their demolition; but he had never formed these prejudices, had he been void of a sense of beauty. Did ever blind men debate whether purple or scarlet were the finer colour? or could any education prejudice them in favour of either as colours?

Thus education and custom may influence our internal senses, where they are antecedently, by enlarging the capacity of our minds to retain and compare the parts of complex compositions: and then, if the finest objects are presented to us, we grow conscious of a pleasure far superior to what common performances excite. But all this presupposes our sense of beauty to be natural. Instruction in anatomy, observation of nature, and of those airs of the countenance, and attitudes of body, which accompany any sentiment, action, or passion, may enable us to know where there is a just imitation: but why should an exact imitation please upon observation, if we had not naturally a sense of

beauty in it, more than the observing the situation of fifty or a hundred pebbles thrown at random? and should we observe them ever so often, we should never dream of their growing beautiful.

*Prejudices how
removed.*

IV. THERE is something worth our observation as to the manner of rooting out the prejudices of education, not quite foreign to the present purpose. When the prejudice arises from associations of ideas without any natural connection, we must frequently force ourselves to bear representations of those objects, or the use of them when separated from the disagreeable idea; and this may at last disjoin the unreasonable association, especially if we can join new agreeable ideas to them: thus, opinions of superstition are best removed by pleasant conversation of persons we esteem for their virtue, or by observing that they despise such opinions. But when the prejudice arises from an apprehension or opinion of natural evil, as the attendant, or consequent of any object or action; if the evil be apprehended to be the constant and immediate attendant, a few trials, without receiving any damage, will remove the prejudice, as in that against meats: but where the evil is not represented as the perpetual concomitant, but as what may possibly or probably at some time or other accompany the use of the object, there must be frequent reasoning with ourselves, or a long series of trials without any detriment, to remove the prejudice; such is the case of our fear of spirits in the

dark, and in church-yards. And when the evil is represented as the consequence perhaps a long time after, or in a future state, it is then hardest of all to remove the prejudice; and this is only to be effected by slow processes of reason, because in this case there can be no trials made: and this is the case of superstitious prejudices against actions apprehended as offensive to the Deity; and hence it is that they are so hard to be rooted out.

V. **EXAMPLE** seems to operate in this manner. We are conscious that we act very much for pleasure, or private good; and are thereby led to imagine that others do so too: hence we conclude there must be some perfection in the objects which we see others pursue, and evil in those which we observe them constantly shunning. Or, the example of others may serve to us as so many trials to remove the apprehension of evil in objects to which we had an aversion. But all this is done upon an apprehension of qualities perceivable by the senses which we have; for no example will induce the blind or deaf to pursue objects as colour'd or sonorous; nor could example any more engage us to pursue objects as beautiful or harmonious, had we no natural sense of beauty or harmony.

*Example not
the cause of
internal sense.*

Example may make us conclude without examination, that our countrymen have obtain'd the perfection of beauty in their works, or that there is less beauty in the orders of architecture or painting, us'd in o-

ther nations, and so content ourselves with very imperfect forms. And fear of contempt as void of taste or genius, often makes us join in approving the performances of the reputed masters in our country, and restrains those who have naturally a fine genius, or the internal senses very acute, from studying to obtain the greatest perfection ; it makes also those of a bad taste pretend to a livelier perception of beauty than in reality they have : but all this presupposes some natural power of receiving ideas of beauty and harmony. Nor can example effect any thing farther, unless it be to lead men to pursue objects by implicit faith, for some perfection which the pursuer is conscious he does not know, or which perhaps is some very different quality from the idea perceiv'd by those of a good taste in such affairs.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the Importance of the internal Senses in Life, and the final Causes of them.

I. **T**HE busy part of mankind may look upon these things as airy dreams of an inflamed imagination, which a wise man should despise, who rationally pursues more solid possessions independent on fancy: but a little reflection will convince us, “That the gratifications of our internal senses are as natural, real, and satisfying enjoyments as any sensible pleasure whatsoever; and that they are the chief ends for which we commonly pursue wealth and power.” For how is wealth or power advantageous? How do they make us happy, or prove good to us? No otherwise than as they supply gratifications to our senses, or faculties of perceiving pleasure. Now, are these senses or faculties only the external ones? No: every body sees, that a small portion of wealth or power will supply more pleasures of the external senses than we can enjoy; we know that scarcity often heightens these perceptions more than abundance, which cloy that appetite which is necessary to all pleasure in enjoyment: and hence the poet’s advice is perfectly just;

*Importance
of the internal
senses.*

———Tu pulmentaria quaere

Sudando———*

In short, the only use of a great fortune above a very small one (except in good offices, and moral pleasures) must be to supply us with the pleasures of beauty, order, and harmony.

It is true indeed, that the noblest pleasures of the internal senses, in the contemplation of the works of nature, are exposed to every one without expence; the poor and the low, may have as free use of these objects, in this way, as the wealthy or powerful. And even in objects which may be appropriated, the property is of little consequence to the enjoyment of their beauty, which is often enjoyed by others beside the proprietor. But then there are other objects of these internal senses, which require wealth or power to procure the use of them as frequently as we desire; as appears in architecture, music, gardening, painting, dress, equipage, furniture; of which we cannot have the full enjoyment without property. And there are some confused imaginations, which often lead us to pursue property, even in objects where it is not necessary to the true enjoyment of them. These are the ultimate motives of our pursuing the greater degrees of wealth, where there are no generous intentions of virtuous actions.

This is confirmed by the constant practice of the very enemies to these senses. As soon as they think

* Hor. lib. ii. sat. 2. v. 20.

they are got above the world, or extricated from the hurries of avarice and ambition; banished nature will return upon them, and set them upon pursuits of beauty and order in their houses, gardens, dress, table, equipage. They are never easy without some degree of this; and were their hearts open to our view, we should see regularity, decency, beauty, as what their wishes terminate upon, either to themselves or to their posterity; and what their imagination is always presenting to them as the possible effects of their labours. Nor without this could they ever justify their pursuits to themselves.

There may perhaps be some instances of human nature perverted into a thorow miser, who loves nothing but money, and whose fancy arises no higher than the cold dull thought of possession; but such an instance in an age, must not be made the standard of mankind against the whole body.

If we examine the pursuits of the luxurious, who is imagined wholly devoted to his belly; we shall generally find that the far greater part of his expence is employed to procure other sensations than those of taste; such as fine attendants, regular apartments, services of plate, and the like. Besides, a large share of the preparation must be supposed designed for some sort of generous friendly purposes, to please acquaintance, strangers, parasites. How few would be contented to enjoy the same sensations alone, in a cottage, or out of earthen pitchers? To conclude this point, how-

ever these internal sensations may be overlooked in our philosophical inquiries about the human faculties, we shall find in fact, "That they employ us more, and
 "are more efficacious in life, either to our pleasure
 "or uneasiness, than all our external senses taken together."

*Final cause
 of the internal
 senses.*

II. As to the final causes of this internal sense, we need not inquire, "Whether, to an almighty and all-knowing
 "being, there be any real excellence in
 "regular forms, in acting by general laws, in knowing
 "by theorems?" We seem scarce capable of answering such questions any way; nor need we inquire, "Whether other animals may not discern uniformity and
 "regularity in objects which escape our observation, and
 "may not perhaps have their senses constituted so as to
 "perceive beauty from the same foundation which we
 "do, in objects which our senses are not fit to examine
 "or compare?" We shall confine ourselves to a subject where we have some certain foundation to go upon, and only inquire, "if we can find any reasons
 "worthy of the great Author of nature, for making
 "such a connection between regular objects, and the
 "pleasure which accompanies our perceptions of them;
 "or, what reasons might possibly influence him to
 "create the world, as it at present is, as far as we can
 "observe, every-where full of regularity and uniformity."

Let it be here observed, that as far as we know

concerning any of the great bodies of the universe, we see forms and motions really beautiful to our senses; and if we were placed in any planet, the apparent courses would still be regular and uniform, and consequently beautiful to us. Now this gives us no small ground to imagine, that if the senses of their inhabitants are in the same manner adapted to their habitations, and the objects occurring to their view, as ours are here, their senses must be upon the same general foundation with ours.

But to return to the questions: what occurs to resolve them, may be contained in the following propositions.

1. The manner of knowledge by universal theorems, and of operation by universal causes, as far as we can attain it, must be most convenient for beings of limited understanding and power; since this prevents distraction in their understandings thro' the multiplicity of propositions, and toil and weariness to their powers of action: and consequently their reason, without any sense of beauty, must approve of such methods when they reflect upon their apparent advantage.

2. Those objects of contemplation in which there is uniformity amidst variety, are more distinctly and easily comprehended and retained, than irregular objects; because the accurate observation of one or two parts often leads to the knowledge of the whole: thus we can from a pillar or two, with an intermediate arch, and cornice, form a distinct idea of a whole re-

gular building, if we know of what species it is, and have its length and breadth : from a side and solid angle, we have the whole regular solid ; the measuring one side, gives the whole square ; one radius, the whole circle ; two diameters, an oval ; one ordinate and abscissa, the parabola ; thus also other figures, if they have any regularity, are in every point determined from a few data : whereas it must be a long attention to a vast multiplicity of parts, which can ascertain or fix the idea of any irregular form, or give any distinct idea of it, or make us capable of retaining it ; as appears in the forms of rude rocks, and pebbles, and confused heaps, even when the multitude of sensible parts is not so great as in the regular forms : for such irregular objects distract the mind with variety, since for every sensible part we must have a quite different idea.

3. From these two propositions it follows, “ That
“ beings of limited understanding and power, if they
“ act rationally for their own interest, must choose to
“ operate by the simplest means, to invent general
“ theorems, and to study regular objects, if they be
“ as useful as irregular ones ; that they may avoid
“ the endless toil of producing each effect by a separate operation, of searching out each different truth
“ by a different inquiry, and of imprinting the endless
“ variety of dissimilar ideas in irregular objects.”

4. But then, beside this consideration of interest, there does not appear to be any necessary connection,

antecedent to the constitution of the Author of nature, between regular forms, actions, theorems, and that sudden sensible pleasure excited in us upon observation of them, even when we do not reflect upon the advantage mentioned in the former proposition. And possibly, the Deity could have formed us so as to have received no immediate pleasure from such object, or connected pleasure to those of a quite contrary nature. We have a tolerable presumption of this in the beauties of various animals; they give some small pleasure indeed to every one who views them; but then every one seems far more delighted with the peculiar beauties of its own species, than with those of a different one, which seldom raise any desire *. This makes it probable, that the pleasure is not the necessary result of the form itself, otherwise it would equally effect all apprehensions in what species soever; but depends upon a voluntary constitution, adapted to preserve the regularity of the universe, and is probably not the effect of necessity, but choice, in the supreme Agent, who constituted our senses.

5. Now from the whole we may conclude, "That supposing the Deity so kind
"as to connect sensible pleasure with cer-
"tain actions or contemplations, beside
"the rational advantage perceivable in them; there
"is a great moral necessity, from his goodness, that the

*From the di-
vine good-
ness.*

* See Cicero de Nat. Deor. lib. i. c. 27.

“ internal sense of men should be constituted as it is
 “ at present, so as to make uniformity amidst variety
 “ the occasion of pleasure.” For were it not so, but
 on the contrary, if irregular objects, particular truths
 and operations pleased us, beside the endless toil this
 would involve us in, there must arise a perpetual dissat-
 isfaction in all rational agents with themselves; since
 reason and interest would lead us to simple general cau-
 ses, while a contrary sense of beauty would make us
 disapprove them: universal theorems would appear to
 our understanding the best means of increasing our
 knowledge of what might be useful; while a contrary
 sense would set us on the search after particular truths:
 thought and reflection would recommend objects with
 uniformity amidst variety, and yet this perverse instinct
 would involve us in labyrinths of confusion and diffi-
 militude. And hence we see “ how suitable it is to
 “ the sagacious bounty which we suppose in the Deity,
 “ to constitute our internal senses in the manner in
 “ which they are; by which pleasure is joined to the
 “ contemplation of those objects which a finite mind
 “ can best imprint and retain the ideas of with the least
 “ distraction; to those actions which are most efficaci-
 “ ous, and fruitful in useful effects; and to those the-
 “ orems which most enlarge our minds.”

III. As to the other question, “ What
 “ reason might influence the Deity, whom
 “ no diversity of operation could distract or
 “ weary, to choose to operate by simplest

*Reason of
 general
 laws.*

“ means, and general laws, and to diffuse uniformity, “ proportion, and similitude thro’ all the parts of nature which we can observe ?” Perhaps there may be some real excellence in this manner of operation, and in these forms, which we know not : but this we may probably say, that since the divine goodness, for the reasons above-mentioned, has constituted our sense of beauty as it is at present, the same goodness might have determined the great Architect to adorn this stupendous theatre in a manner agreeable to the spectators, and that part which is exposed to the observation of men, so as to be pleasant to them ; especially if we suppose, that he designed to discover himself to them as wise and good, as well as powerful : for thus he has given them greater evidences, thro’ the whole earth, of his art, wisdom, design, and bounty, than they can possibly have for the reason, counsel, and good-will of their fellow-creatures, with whom they converse, with full persuasion of these qualities in them, about their common affairs.

As to the operations of the Deity by general laws, there is still a farther reason from a sense superior to these already considered, even that of virtue, or the beauty of action, which is the foundation of our greatest happiness. For were there no general laws fixed in the course of nature, there could be no prudence or design in men, no rational expectation of effects from causes, no schemes of action projected, or any regular execution. If then, according to the frame of our na-

ture, our greatest happiness must depend upon our actions, as it may perhaps be made appear it does, "the universe must be governed, not by particular wills, but by general laws, upon which we can found our expectations, and project our schemes of action." Nay farther, though general laws did ordinarily obtain, yet if the Deity usually stopped their effects whenever it was necessary to prevent any particular evils; this would effectually, and justly supersede all human prudence and care about actions; since a superior mind did thus relieve men from their charge.

T R E A T I S E II.
A N
I N Q U I R Y
C O N C E R N I N G
M O R A L G O O D A N D E V I L.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

THE word *moral goodness* in this treatise, denotes our idea of some *Moral good* quality apprehended in actions, *and evil.*

which procures approbation, attended with a desire of the agent's happiness. *Moral evil* denotes our idea of a contrary quality, which excites condemnation or dislike. Approbation and condemnation are probably simple ideas, which cannot be further explained. We must be contented with these imperfect descriptions, until we discover whether we really have such ideas, and what general foundation there is in nature for this difference of actions, as morally good or evil.

These descriptions seem to contain an universally acknowledged difference of moral good and evil, from natural. All men who speak of moral good, acknow-

ledge that it procures approbation and good-will toward those we apprehend possessed of it; whereas natural good does not. In this matter men must consult their own breasts. How differently are they affected toward these they suppose possessed of honesty, faith, generosity, kindness; and those who are possessed of the natural goods, such as houses, lands, gardens, vineyards, health, strength, sagacity? We shall find that we necessarily love and approve the possessors of the former; but the possession of the latter procures no approbation or good-will at all toward the possessor, but often contrary affections of envy and hatred. In the same manner, whatever quality we apprehend to be morally evil, raises our dislike toward the person in whom we observe it, such as treachery, cruelty, ingratitude; whereas we heartily love, esteem, and pity many who are exposed to natural evils, such as pain, poverty, hunger, sickness, death.

Now the first question on this subject is, "Whence arise these different ideas of actions?"

Interest. Because we shall afterwards frequently use the words interest, advantage, natural good, it is necessary here to fix their ideas. The pleasure in our sensible perceptions of any kind, gives us our first idea of natural good or happiness; and then all objects which are apt to excite this pleasure are called immediately good. Those objects which may procure others immediately pleasant, are

called advantageous : and we pursue both kinds from a view of interest, or from self-love.

Our sense of pleasure is antecedent to advantage or interest, and is the foundation of it. We do not perceive pleasure in objects, because it is our interest to do so ; but objects or actions are advantageous, and are pursued or undertaken from interest, because we receive pleasure from them. Our perception of pleasure is necessary, and nothing is advantageous or naturally good to us, but what is apt to raise pleasure mediately, or immediately. Such objects as we know either from experience of sense, or reason, to be immediately or mediately advantageous, or apt to minister pleasure, we are said to pursue from self-interest, when our intention is only to enjoy this pleasure, which they have the power of exciting. Thus meats, drink, harmony, fine prospects, painting, statues, are perceived by our senses to be immediately good ; and our reason shews riches and power to be mediately so, that is, apt to furnish us with objects of immediate pleasure : and both kinds of these natural goods are pursued from interest, or self-love.

Now the greatest part of our later moralists establish it as undeniable,

“ That all moral qualities have neces-

“ sarily some relation to the law of a

“ superior, of sufficient power to make

“ us happy or miserable ;” and since all laws operate only by sanctions of rewards, or punishments, which

*Opinions about
our sense of
moral good and
evil.*

determine us to obedience by motives of self-interest, they suppose, "that it is thus that laws do constitute
" some actions mediately good, or advantageous,
" and others the same way disadvantageous." They say indeed, "That a benevolent legislator constitutes
" no actions advantageous to the agent by law, but
" such as in their own nature tend to the natural good
" of the whole, or, at least, are not inconsistent with
" it; and that therefore we approve the virtue of
" others, because it has some small tendency to our
" happiness, either from its own nature, or from this
" general consideration, that obedience to a benevolent
" legislator is in general advantageous to the whole,
" and to us in particular; and that for the contrary
" reasons alone, we disapprove the vice of others, that
" is, the prohibited action, as tending to our particular
" detriment in some degree." And then they maintain, "That we are determined to obedience to laws,
" or deterred from disobedience, merely by motives
" of self-interest, to obtain either the natural good arising from the commanded action, or the rewards
" promised by the sanction; or to avoid the natural
" evil consequences of disobedience, or at least the
" penalties of the law.

Some other moralists suppose "an immediate natural good in the actions called virtuous; that is,
" that we are determined to perceive some beauty in
" the actions of others, and to love the agent, even
" without reflecting upon any advantage which can

“ any way redound to us from the action ; that we
“ have also a secret sense of pleasure arising from re-
“ flection upon such of our own actions as we call vir-
“ tuous, even when we expect no other advantage
“ from them.” But they alledge at the same time,
“ That we are excited to perform these actions, even
“ as we pursue, or purchase pictures, statues, landships,
“ from self-interest, to obtain this pleasure which ar-
“ ses from reflection upon the action, or some other fu-
“ ture advantage.” The design of the following sec-
tions is to inquire into this matter ; and perhaps the
reasons to be offered may prove,

I. “ THAT some actions have to men an immediate
“ goodness ; or, that by a superior sense, which I call
“ a moral one, we approve the actions of others, and
“ perceive them to be their perfection and dignity, and
“ are determined to love the agent ; a like perception
“ we have in reflecting on such actions of our own,
“ without any view of natural advantage from them.”

II. IT may perhaps also appear, “ That the affec-
“ tion, desire, or intention, which gains approbation
“ to the actions flowing from it, is not an intention to
“ obtain even this pleasant self-approbation ; much
“ less the future rewards from sanctions of laws, or any
“ other natural good, which may be the consequence
“ of the virtuous action ; but an intirely different
“ principle of action from self-love, or desire of private
“ good.”

S E C T. I.

Of the moral Sense, by which we perceive Virtue and Vice, and approve or disapprove them in others.

Different ideas of moral and natural good. I. **T**HAT the perceptions of moral good and evil, are perfectly different from those of natural good or advantage, every one must convince himself, by reflecting upon the different manner in which he finds himself affected when these objects occur to him. Had we no sense of good distinct from the advantage or interest arising from the external senses, and the perceptions of beauty and harmony; the sensations and affections toward a fruitful field, or commodious habitation, would be much the same with what we have toward a generous friend, or any noble character; for both are or may be advantageous to us: and we should no more admire any action, or love any person in a distant country, or age, whose influence could not extend to us, than we love the mountains of Peru, while we are unconcerned in the Spanish trade. We should have the same sentiments and affections toward inanimate beings, which we have toward rational agents, which yet every one knows to be false. Upon comparison, we say, "Why should we approve or love inanimate beings? They have no intention of good to us, or to any other person;

“ their nature makes them fit for our uses, which they
 “ neither know nor study to serve. But it is not so
 “ with rational agents : they study the interest, and de-
 “ sire the happiness of other beings with whom they
 “ converse.”

We are all then conscious of the difference between that approbation or perception of moral excellence, which benevolence excites toward the person in whom we observe it, and that opinion of natural goodness, which only raises desire of possession toward the good object. Now “ what should make this difference, if
 “ all approbation, or sense of good be from prospect of
 “ advantage ? Do not inanimate objects promote our
 “ advantage as well as benevolent persons, who do us
 “ offices of kindness and friendship ? Should we not
 “ then have the same endearing approbation of both ?
 “ or only the same cold opinion of advantage in
 “ both ? ” The reason why it is not so, must be this,
 “ That we have a distinct perception of beauty or ex-
 “ cellence in the kind affections of rational agents ;
 “ whence we are determined to admire and love such
 “ characters and persons.”

Suppose we reap the same advantage from two men, one of whom serves us from an ultimate desire of our happiness, or good-will toward us ; the other from views of self-interest, or by constraint : both are in this case equally beneficial or advantageous to us, and yet we shall have quite different sentiments of them,

*In actions
 done to
 ourselves.*

We must then certainly have other perceptions of moral actions, than those of advantage: and that power of receiving these perceptions may be called a moral sense, since the definition agrees to it, viz. a determination of the mind, to receive any idea from the presence of an object which occurs to us, independent on our will *.

Of evil, moral and natural. This perhaps will be equally evident from our ideas of evil, done to us designedly by a rational agent. Our senses of natural good and evil would make us receive, with equal serenity and composure, an assault, a buffet, an affront from a neighbour, a cheat from a partner, or trustee, as we would an equal damage from the fall of a beam, a tile, or a tempest; and we should have the same affections and sentiments on both occasions. Villainy, treachery, cruelty, would be as meekly resented as a blast, or mildew, or an overflowing stream. But I fancy every one is very differently affected on these occasions, tho' there may be equal natural evil in both. Nay, actions no way detrimental may occasion the strongest anger and indignation, if they evidence only impotent hatred or contempt. And, on the other hand, the intervention of moral ideas may prevent our condemnation of the agent, or bad moral apprehension of that action, which causes to us the greatest natural evil. Thus the opinion of justice in any

* See the preface, page 6.

sentence, will prevent all ideas of moral evil in the execution, or hatred toward the magistrate, who is the immediate cause of our greatest sufferings.

II. In our sentiments of action which affect ourselves, there is indeed a mixture of the ideas of natural and moral good, which require some attention to separate them. *In actions toward others.* But when we reflect upon the actions which affect other persons only, we may observe the moral ideas unmix'd with those of natural good or evil. For let it be here observ'd, that those senses by which we perceive pleasure in natural objects, whence they are constituted advantageous, could never raise in us any desire of public good, but only of what was good to ourselves in particular. Nor could they ever make us approve an action merely because of its promoting the happiness of others. And yet, as soon as any action is represented to us as flowing from love, humanity, gratitude, compassion, a study of the good of others, and an ultimate desire of their happiness, although it were in the most distant part of the world, or in some past age, we feel joy within us, admire the lovely action, and praise its author. And on the contrary, every action represented as flowing from ill-will, desire of the misery of others without view to any prevalent good to the public, or ingratitude, raises abhorrence and aversion.

It is true indeed, that the actions we approve in others, are generally imagined to tend to the natural good of mankind, or of some parts of it. But whence

this secret chain between each person and mankind? How is my interest connected with the most distant parts of it? And yet I must admire actions which shew good-will toward them, and love the author. Whence this love, compassion, indignation and hatred toward even feigned characters, in the most distant ages, and nations, according as they appear kind, faithful, compassionate, or of the opposite dispositions, toward their imaginary contemporaries? If there is no moral sense, which makes benevolent actions appear beautiful; if all approbation be from the interest of the approver,

What's Hecuba to us, or we to Hecuba? *

Moral ideas III. Some refin'd explainers of self-love may tell us, "That we approve or not from interest." "condemn characters, according as we apprehend we should have been supported, or injur'd by them, had we liv'd in their days." But how obvious is the answer, if we only observe, that had we no sense of moral good in humanity, mercy, faithfulness, why should not self-love, and our sense of natural good engage us always to the victorious side, and make us admire and love the successful tyrant, or traitor? Why do not we love Sinon or Pyrrhus, in the Aeneid? for, had we been Greeks, these two would have been very advantageous characters. Why are we affected with the fortunes of Priamus, Polites, Choroebus or Aeneas? Would not the

* Tragedy of Hamlet.

parsimony of a miser be as advantageous to his heir, as the generosity of a worthy man is to his friend? And cannot we as easily imagine ourselves heirs to misers, as the favourites of heroes? Why don't we then approve both alike? It is plain we have some secret sense which determines our approbation without regard to self-interest; otherwise we should always favour the fortunate side without regard to virtue, and suppose ourselves engaged with that party.

As Mr. Hobbes explains all the sensations of pity by our fear of the like evils, when by imagination we place ourselves in the case of the sufferers; so others explain all approbation and condemnation of actions in distant ages or nations, by a like effort of imagination: we place ourselves in the case of others, and then discern an imaginary private advantage or disadvantage in these actions. But as his account of pity will never explain how the sensation increases, according to the apprehended worth of the sufferer, or according to the affection we formerly had to him; since the sufferings of any stranger may suggest the same possibility of our suffering the like: so this explication will never account for our high approbation of brave unsuccessful attempts, which we see prove detrimental both to the agent, and to those for whose service they were intended; here there is no private advantage to be imagined. Nor will it account for our abhorrence of such injuries as we are capable of suffering. Sure, when a man abhors the attempt of the young Tarquin, he does not imagine that he has chang'd his sex like Caeus.

And then, when one corrects his imagination, by remembering his own situation, and circumstances, we find the moral approbation and condemnation continues as lively as it was before, tho' the imagination of advantage is gone.

Suppose any great destruction occasion'd by mere accident, without any design, or negligence of the person who casually was the author of it: this action might have been as disadvantageous to us as design'd cruelty, or malice; but who will say he has the same idea of both actions, or sentiments of the agents? thus also an easy, indolent simplicity, which exposes a man of wealth as a prey to others, may be as advantageous a disposition as the most prudent generosity, to those he converses with; and yet our sentiments of this latter temper are far nobler than of the former. "Whence then this difference?"

And farther, let us make a supposition, which perhaps is not far from matter of fact, to try if we cannot approve even disadvantageous actions, and perceive moral good in them. A few ingenious artificers, persecuted in their own country, flee to ours for protection; they instruct us in manufactures which support millions of poor, increase the wealth of almost every person in the state, and make us formidable to our neighbours. In a nation not far distant from us, some resolute burgomasters, full of love to their country, and compassion toward their fellow-citizens, oppress'd in body and soul by a tyrant and inquisition, with indefatigable diligence, pu-

blic spirit, and courage, support a tedious perilous war against the tyrant, and form an industrious republic, which rivals us in trade, and almost in power. All the world sees whether the former or the latter have been more advantageous to us: and yet let every man consult his own breast, which of the two characters he has the most agreeable idea of? whether of the useful refugee, or the public-spirited burgomaster, by whose love to his own country, we have often suffered in our interests? And I am confident he will find some other foundation of esteem than advantage, and will see a just reason, why the memory of our artificers is so obscure among us, and yet that of our rivals is immortal.

IV. Some moralists, who will rather twist self-love into a thousand shapes, than allow any other principle of approbation than interest, may tell us,

*Self-love not
the ground of
approbation.*

“ That whatever profits one part without detriment
“ to another, profits the whole, and then some small
“ share will redound to each individual; that those ac-
“ tions which tend to the good of the whole, if uni-
“ versally performed, would most effectually secure to
“ each individual his own happiness; and that conse-
“ quently, we may approve such actions, from the
“ opinion of their tending ultimately to our own ad-
“ vantage.”

We need not trouble these gentlemen to shew by their nice train of consequences, and influences of acti-

ons by way of precedent in particular instances, that we in this age reap any advantage from Orestes's killing the treacherous Aegysthus, or from the actions of Codrus or Decius. Allow their reasonings to be perfectly good, they only prove, that after long reflection and reasoning, we may find out some ground to judge certain actions advantageous to us, which every man admires as soon as he hears of them; and that too under a quite different conception.

Should any of our travellers find some old Grecian treasure, the miser who hid it, certainly performed an action more to the traveller's advantage, than Codrus or Orestes; for he must have but a small share of benefit from their actions, whose influence is so dispersed, and lost in various ages and nations: surely then this miser must appear to the traveller a prodigious hero in virtue! For self-interest will recommend men to us only according to the good they do to ourselves, and not give us high ideas of public good, but in proportion to our share of it. But must a man have the reflection of Cumberland or Puffendorf, to admire generosity, faith, humanity, gratitude? Or reason so nicely to apprehend the evil in cruelty, treachery, ingratitude? Do not the former excite our admiration, and love, and study of imitation, wherever we see them, almost at first view, without any such reflection, and the latter, our contempt, and abhorrence? Unhappy would it be for mankind, if a sense of virtue was of as narrow an extent, as a capacity for such metaphysics.

V. THIS moral sense, either of our own actions, or of those of others, has this in common with our other senses, that however our desire of virtue may be counterbalanced by interest, our sentiment or perception of its beauty cannot; as it certainly might be, if the only ground of our approbation were views of advantage. Let us consider this both as to our own actions, and those of others.

Our moral sense cannot be bribed.

A covetous man shall dislike any branch of trade, how useful soever it may be to the public, if there is no gain for himself in it; here is an aversion from interest.

In judging of our own actions.

Propose a sufficient premium, and he shall be the first who sets about it, with full satisfaction in his own conduct. Now is it the same way with our sense of moral actions? Should any one advise us to wrong a minor, or orphan, or to do an ungrateful action, toward a benefactor; we at first view abhor it: assure us that it will be very advantageous to us, propose even a reward; our sense of the action is not alter'd. It is true, these motives may make us undertake it; but they have no more influence upon us to make us approve it, than a physician's advice has to make a nauseous potion pleasant to the taste, when we perhaps force ourselves to take it for the recovery of health.

Had we no notion of actions, beside our opinion of their advantage or disadvantage, could we ever choose an action as advantageous, which we are conscious is

still evil? as it too often happens in human affairs. Where would be the need of such high bribes to prevail with men to abandon the interests of a ruin'd party, or of tortures to force out the secrets of their friends? Is it so hard to convince men's understandings, if that be the only faculty we have to do with, that it is probably more advantageous to secure present gain, and avoid present evils, by joining with the prevalent party, than to wait for the remote possibility of future good, upon a revolution often improbable, and sometimes unexpected? And when men are overpersuaded by advantage, do they always approve their own conduct? Nay, how often is their remaining life odious, and shameful, in their own sense of it, as well as in that of others, to whom the base action was profitable?

If any one becomes satisfy'd with his own conduct in such a case, upon what ground is it? How does he please himself, or vindicate his actions to others? Never by reflecting upon his private advantage, or alledging this to others as a vindication; but by gradually warping into the moral principles of his new party; for no party is without them. And thus men become pleas'd with their actions under some appearance of moral good, distinct from advantage.

*Our moral sense
not founded on
religion.*

It may perhaps be alledged, "That
" in those actions of our own which
" we call good, there is this constant
" advantage, superior to all others,

“ which is the ground of our approbation, and the
 “ motive to them from self-love, viz. That we sup-
 “ pose the Deity will reward them.” This will be
 more fully considered * hereafter: at present it is e-
 nough to observe, that many have high notions of ho-
 nour, faith, generosity, justice, who have scarce any
 dispositions of piety, or thoughts of future rewards;
 and abhor any thing which is treacherous, cruel, or un-
 just, without any regard to future punishments.

But farther, tho’ these rewards and punishments,
 may make my own actions appear advantageous to me,
 yet they would never make me approve, and love ano-
 ther person for the like actions, whose merit would not
 be imputed to me. Those actions are advantageous
 indeed to the agent; but his advantage is not my ad-
 vantage: and self-love could never recommend to me
 actions as advantageous to others, or make me like the
 authors of them on that account.

This is the second thing to be con-
 sidered, “ Whether our sense of the
 “ moral good or evil in the actions of
 “ others, can be overbalanc’d, or brib-
 “ ed by views of interest.” Now I may

*Our moral sense
 of the actions of
 others, not to be
 bribed.*

indeed easily be capable of wishing, that another would
 do an action I abhor as morally evil, if it were very
 advantageous to me: interest in that case may overba-
 lance my desire of virtue in another: but no interest to

* See sect. II. art. 7.

myself, will make me approve an action as morally good, which without that interest to myself, would have appeared morally evil; if upon computing its whole effects, it appears to produce as great a moment of good in the whole, when it is not beneficial to me, as it did before, when it was. In our sense of moral good or evil, our own private advantage or loss is of no more moment, than the advantage or loss of a third person, to make an action appear good or evil. This sense therefore cannot be over-balanced by interest. How ridiculous an attempt would it be, to engage a man by rewards or threatnings into a good opinion of an action, which was contrary to his moral notions? We may procure dissimulation by such means, and that is all.

VI. A LATE witty author * says,
Not occasion- " That the leaders of mankind do not
ed by praise. " really admire such actions as those
 " of Regulus, or Decius, but only observe, that men
 " of such dispositions are very useful for the defence
 " of any state; and therefore by panegyrics, and statues, they encourage such tempers in others, as the
 " most tractable and useful." Here first let us consider, If a traitor, who would sell his own country to us, may not often be as advantageous to us, as an hero who defends us: and yet we can love the treason,

* See the Fable of the Bees, page 34, 36. third edition.

and hate the traitor. We can at the same time praise a gallant enemy, who is very pernicious to us. Is there nothing in all this but an opinion of advantage?

Again, upon this scheme what could a statue or panegyric effect?—Men love praise—They will do the actions which they observe to be praised—Praise, with men who have no other idea of good but self-interest, is the opinion which a nation or party have of a man as useful to them——Regulus, or Cato, or Decius, had no advantage by the actions which profited their country, and therefore they themselves could not admire them, however the persons who reaped the advantage might praise such actions.—Regulus or Cato could not possibly praise or love another hero for a virtuous action; for this would not gain them the advantage of honour; and their own actions they must have looked upon as the hard terms on which honour was to be purchased, without any thing amiable in them, which they could contemplate or reflect upon with pleasure. Nay, what should excite a Cato or a Decius to desire praise, if it is only the cold opinion of others that they were useful to the state, without any perception of excellence in such conduct?—Now how unlike is this to what the least observation would teach a man concerning such characters?

But says * he, “These wondrous cunning governors made men believe, by their statues and pan-

* See the same author in the same place.

“gyrics, that there was public spirit, and that this was
 “in itself excellent; and hence men are led to admire
 “it in others, and to imitate it in themselves, forget-
 “ting the pursuit of their own advantage.” So easy
 a matter it seems to him, to quit judging of others by
 what we feel in ourselves!—for a person who is whol-
 ly selfish, to imagine others to be public-spirited!—
 for one who has no ideas of good but in his own ad-
 vantage, to be led by the persuasions of others, into
 a conception of goodness in what is avowedly detrimen-
 tal to himself, and profitable to others; nay, so intire-
 ly, as not to approve the action thoroughly, but so far
 as he was conscious that it proceeded from a disinte-
 rested study of the good of others!—Yet this it seems
 statues and panegyrics can accomplish!

“Nil intra est oleam, nil extra est in nuce duri!†

It is an easy matter for men to assert any thing in
 words; but our own hearts must decide the matter,
 “Whether some moral actions do not at first view ap-
 “pear amiable even to those who are unconcerned in
 “their influence? Whether we do not sincerely ap-
 “prove and love a generous kind friend, or patriot,
 “whose actions procure honour to him only, without
 “any advantage to ourselves?” It is true, that the
 actions which we approve, are useful to mankind; but
 not always to the approver. It would perhaps be use-

† Hor. Ep. 1. lib. 2. v. 31.

ful to the whole, that all men agreed in performing such actions; and then every one would have his share of the advantage: but this only proves, that reason and calm reflection may recommend to us, from self-interest, those actions, which at first view our moral sense determines us to admire, without considering this interest. Nay, our sense shall operate even where the advantage to ourselves does not hold. We can approve the justice of a sentence against ourselves: a condemned traitor may approve the vigilance of a Cicero in discovering conspiracies, though it had been for the traitor's advantage, that there never had been in the world any men of such sagacity. To say that he may still approve such conduct as tending to the public good, is a jest from one whose only idea of good is self-interest. Such a person has no approbation of public spirit, nor desire of public good, farther than it tends to his own advantage, which it does not at all in the present case.

VII. If what is said makes it appear, *Nor custom, & education, &c.* that we have some other amiable idea of actions than that of advantageous to ourselves, we may conclude, "That this perception of moral good is not derived from custom, education, example, or study." These give us no new ideas: they might make us see private advantage in actions whose usefulness did not at first appear; or give us opinions of some tendency of actions to our detriment, by some nice deductions of reason, or by a rash

prejudice, when upon the first view of the action we should have observed no such thing : but they never could have made us apprehend actions as amiable or odious, without any consideration of our own advantage.

VIII. It remains then, " That as the Author of
 " nature has determined us to receive, by our exter-
 " nal senses, pleasant or disagreeable ideas of objects,
 " according as they are useful or hurtful to our bodies ;
 " and to receive from uniform objects the pleasures of
 " beauty and harmony, to excite us to the pursuit of
 " knowledge, and to reward us for it ; or to be an ar-
 " gument to us of his goodness, as the uniformity it-
 " self proves his existence, whether we had a sense of
 " beauty in uniformity or not ; in the same manner
 " he has given us a *moral sense*, to direct our actions,
 " and to give us still nobler pleasures : so that while
 " we are only intending the good of others, we unde-
 " signedly promote our own greatest private good."

*This moral sense
 does not infer in-
 nate ideas or pro-
 positions.*

We are not to imagine, that this moral sense, more than the other senses, supposes any innate ideas, knowledge, or practical proposition : we mean by it only " a determina-
 " tion of our minds to receive the simple ideas of ap-
 " probation or condemnation, from actions observed,
 " antecedent to any opinions of advantage or loss to
 " redound to ourselves from them ;" even as we are pleased with a regular form, or an harmonious compo-

sition, without having any knowledge of Mathematics, or seeing any advantage in that form or composition, different from the immediate pleasure.

That we may discern more distinctly the difference between moral perceptions and others, let us consider, when we taste a pleasant fruit, we are conscious of pleasure; when another tastes it, we only conclude or form an opinion that he enjoys pleasure; and, abstracting from some previous good-will or anger, his enjoying this pleasure is to us a matter wholly indifferent, raising no new sentiment or affection. But when we are under the influence of a virtuous temper, and thereby engaged in virtuous actions, we are not always conscious of any pleasure, nor are we only pursuing private pleasures, as will appear hereafter: 'tis only by reflex acts upon our tempers and conduct, that virtue never fails to give pleasure. When also we judge the temper of another to be virtuous, we do not necessarily imagine him then to enjoy pleasure, though we know reflection will give it to him: and farther, our apprehension of his virtuous temper raises sentiments of approbation, esteem or admiration, and the affection of good-will toward him. The quality approved by our moral sense is conceived to reside in the person approved, and to be a perfection and dignity in him: approbation of another's virtue is not conceived as making the approver happy, or virtuous, or worthy, though it is attended with some small pleasure. Virtue is then called amiable or lovely, from its raising good-will or

love in spectators toward the agent ; and not from the agent's perceiving the virtuous temper to be advantageous to him, or desiring to obtain it under that view. A virtuous temper is called good or beatific, not that it is always attended with pleasure in the agent ; much less that some small pleasure attends the contemplation of it in the approver : but from this, that every spectator is persuaded that the reflex acts of the virtuous agent upon his own temper will give him the highest pleasures. The admired quality is conceived as the perfection of the agent, and such a one as is distinct from the pleasure either in the agent or the approver ; though it is a sure source of pleasure to the agent. The perception of the approver, though attended with pleasure, plainly represents something quite distinct from this pleasure ; even as the perception of external forms is attended with pleasure, and yet represents something distinct from this pleasure. This may prevent many cavils upon this subject.

S E C T. II.

Concerning the immediate motive to virtuous actions.

THE motives of human actions, or their *Nature*, immediate causes, would be best understood after considering the passions and affections; but here we shall only consider the springs of the actions which we call virtuous, as far as it is necessary to settle the general foundation of the moral sense.

I. EVERY action, which we apprehend as either morally good or evil, is always supposed to flow from some affection toward sensitive natures; *Affections, the motives to actions.*

and whatever we call virtue or vice, is either some such affection, or some action consequent upon it. Or it may perhaps be enough to make an action or omission, appear vitious, if it argues the want of such affection toward rational agents, as we expect in characters counted morally good. All the actions counted religious in any country, are supposed, by those who count them so, to flow from some affections toward the Deity; and whatever we call social virtue, we still suppose to flow from affections toward our fellow-creatures: for in this all seem to agree, "That external motions, when accompanied with no affections toward God or man, or evidencing no want of the

“ expected affections toward either, can have no moral good or evil in them.”

Ask, for instance, the most abstemious hermit, if temperance of itself would be morally good, supposing it shewed no obedience toward the Deity, made us no fitter for devotion, or the service of mankind, or the search after truth, than luxury; and he will easily grant, that it would be no moral good, though still it might be naturally good or advantageous to health: and mere courage, or contempt of danger, if we conceive it to have no regard to the defence of the innocent, or repairing of wrongs or self-interest, would only entitle its possessor to bedlam. When such sort of courage is sometimes admired, it is upon some secret apprehension of a good intention in the use of it, or as a natural ability capable of an useful application. Prudence, if it was only employed in promoting private interest, is never imagined to be a virtue: and justice, or observing a strict equality, if it has no regard to the good of mankind, the preservation of rights, and securing peace, is a quality properer for its ordinary gestamen, a beam and scales, than for a rational agent. So that these four qualities, commonly called *cardinal virtues*, obtain that name, because they are dispositions universally necessary to promote public good, and denote affections toward rational agents; otherwise there would appear no virtue in them.

Affections disinterested.

II. Now, if it can be made appear, that none of these affections which we approve as virtuous, are either self-

love, or desire of private interest; since all virtue is either some such affections, or actions consequent upon them; it must necessarily follow, "That virtue springs from some other affection than self-love, or desire of private advantage. And where self-interest excites to the same action, the approbation is given only to the disinterested principle."

The affections which are of most importance in morals, are commonly included under the names *love* and *hatred*. Now in discoursing of love, we need not be cautioned not to include that love between the sexes, which, when no other affections accompany it, is only desire of pleasure, and is never counted a virtue. Love toward rational agents, is subdivided into love of complacence or esteem, and love of benevolence: and hatred is subdivided into hatred of displicence or contempt, and hatred of malice. Complacence denotes approbation of any person by our moral sense; and is rather a perception than an affection; though the affection of good-will is ordinarily subsequent to it. Benevolence is the desire of the happiness of another. Their opposites are called dislike and malice. Concerning each of these separately we shall consider, "Whether they can be influenced by motives of self-interest."

Complacence, esteem, or good-liking, at first view appears to be disinterested, and so displicence or dislike; and are in-

Love of complacence, and hatred of displicence.

Are intirely disinterested.

tirely excited by some moral qualities, good or evil, apprehended to be in the objects; which qualities the very frame of our nature determines us to approve or disapprove, according to the moral sense * above explained. Propose to a man all the rewards in the world, or threaten all the punishments, to engage him to esteem and complacence toward a person intirely unknown, or if known, apprehended to be cruel, treacherous, ungrateful; you may procure external obsequiousness, or good offices, or dissimulation; but real esteem no price can purchase. And the same is obvious as to contempt, which no motive of advantage can prevent. On the contrary, represent a character as generous, kind, faithful, humane, though in the most distant parts of the world, and we cannot avoid esteem and complacence. A bribe may possibly make us attempt to ruin such a man, or some strong motive of advantage may excite us to oppose his interest; but it can never make us disapprove him, while we retain the same opinion of his temper and intentions. Nay, when we consult our own hearts, we shall find, that we can scarce ever persuade ourselves to attempt any mischief against such persons, from any motive of advantage; nor execute it without the strongest reluctance and remorse, until we have blinded ourselves into a false opinion about his temper.

III. As to the love of benevolence, *Benevolence* dis- the very name excludes self-interest. *interested.*

* See sect. i.

We never call that man benevolent, who is in fact useful to others, but at the same time only intends his own interest, without any ultimate desire of the good of others. If there be any real good-will or kindness at all, it must be disinterested; for the most useful action imaginable loses all appearance of benevolence, as soon as we discern that it only flowed from self-love, or interest. Thus, never were any human actions more advantageous, than the inventions of fire, and iron; but if these were casual, or if the inventor only intended his own interest in them, there is nothing which can be called benevolent in them. Where-ever then benevolence is supposed, there it is imagined disinterested, and designed for the good of others. To raise benevolence, no more is required than calmly to consider any sensitive nature not pernicious to others. Gratitude arises from benefits conferred from good-will on ourselves, or those we love; complacence is a perception of the moral sense. Gratitude includes some complacence, and complacence still raises a stronger good-will than that we have toward indifferent characters, where there is no opposition of interests.

But it must be here observed, that as all men have self-love, as well as benevolence, these two principles may jointly excite a man to the same action; and then they are to be considered as two forces impelling the same body to motion; sometimes they conspire, sometimes are indifferent to each other, and

Self-love joined with benevolence.

sometimes are in some degree opposite. Thus, if a man have such strong benevolence, as would have produced an action without any views of self-interest; that such a man has also in view private advantage, along with public good, as the effect of his action does no way diminish the benevolence of the action. When he would not have produced so much public good, had it not been for prospect of self-interest, then the effect of self-love is to be deducted, and his benevolence is proportioned to the remainder of good, which pure benevolence would have produced. When a man's benevolence is hurtful to himself, then self-love is opposite to benevolence, and the benevolence is proportioned to the sum of the good produced, added to the resistance of self-love surmounted by it. In most cases it is impossible for men to know how far their fellows are influenced by the one or other of these principles; but yet the general truth is sufficiently certain, that this is the way in which the benevolence of actions is to be computed.

*Benevolence is
disinterested.*

IV. THERE are two ways in which some may deduce benevolence from self-love, the one supposing that "we voluntarily bring this affection upon ourselves, whenever we have an opinion that it will be for our interest to have this affection, either as it may be immediately pleasant, or may afford pleasant reflection afterwards by our moral sense, or as it may tend to procure some external reward from God or man."

The other scheme alledges no such power in us of raising desire or affection of any kind by our choice or volition; but “supposes our minds determined by the
 “frame of their nature to desire whatever is apprehended as the means of any private happiness; and
 “that the observation of the happiness of other persons, in many cases is made the necessary occasion
 “of pleasure to the observer, as their misery is the occasion of his uneasiness: and in consequence of this
 “connexion, as soon as we have observed it, we begin to desire the happiness of others as the means of
 “obtaining this happiness to ourselves, which we expect from the contemplation of others in a happy
 “state. They alledge it to be impossible to desire either the happiness of another, or any event whatsoever, without conceiving it as the means of some
 “happiness or pleasure to ourselves; but own at the same time, that desire is not raised in us directly by
 “any volition, but arises necessarily upon our apprehending any object or event to be conducive to our
 “happiness.”

That the former scheme is not just, may appear from this general consideration, that “neither benevolence nor any
 “other affection or desire can be directly raised by volition.” If they could, then we could be bribed into any affection whatsoever toward any object, even the most improper: we might raise jealousy, fear, anger, love, toward any sort of persons in-

The first contrary opinion confuted.

differently by an hire, even as we engage men to external actions, or to the dissimulation of passions; but this every person will by his own reflection find to be impossible. The prospect of any advantage to arise to us from having any affection, may indeed turn our attention to those qualities in the object, which are naturally constituted the necessary causes or occasions of the advantageous affection; and if we find such qualities in the object, the affection will certainly arise. Thus indirectly the prospect of advantage may tend to raise any affection; but if these qualities be not found or apprehended in the object, no volition of ours, nor desire, will ever raise any affection in us.

But more particularly, that desire of the good of others, which we approve as virtuous, cannot be allowed to be voluntarily raised from prospect of any pleasure accompanying the affection itself: for it is plain that our benevolence is not always accompanied with pleasure; nay, 'tis often attended with pain, when the object is in distress. Desire in general is rather uneasy than pleasant. 'Tis true, indeed, all the passions and affections justify themselves; while they continue, (as Malebranch expresses it) we generally approve our being thus affected on this occasion, as an innocent disposition, or a just one, and condemn a person who would be otherwise affected on the like occasion. So the sorrowful, the angry, the jealous, the compassionate, approve their several passions on the apprehended occasion; but we should not therefore con-

clude, that sorrow, anger, jealousy, or pity are pleasant; or chosen for their concomitant pleasure. The case is plainly thus: the frame of our nature on the occasions which move these passions, determines us to be thus affected, and to approve our affection at least as innocent. Uneasiness generally attends our desires of any kind; and this sensation tends to fix our attention, and to continue the desire. But the desire does not terminate upon the removal of the pain accompanying the desire, but upon some other event: the concomitant pain is what we seldom reflect upon, unless when it is very violent. Nor does any desire or affection terminate upon the pleasure which may accompany the affection; much less is it raised by an act of our will, with a view to obtain this pleasure.

The same reflection will shew, that we do not by an act of our will raise in ourselves that benevolence which we approve as virtuous, with a view to obtain future pleasures of self-approbation by our moral sense. Could we raise affections in this manner, we should be engaged to any affection by the prospect of an interest equivalent to this of self-approbation, such as wealth or sensual pleasure, which with many tempers are more powerful; and yet we universally own, that that disposition to do good offices to others, which is raised by these motives, is not virtuous: how can we then imagine, that the virtuous benevolence is brought upon us by a motive equally selfish?

But what will most effectually convince us of the

truth on this point, is reflection upon our own hearts, whether we have not a desire of the good of others, generally without any consideration or intention of obtaining these pleasant reflections on our own virtue: nay, often this desire is strongest where we least imagine virtue, in natural affection toward offspring, and in gratitude to a great benefactor; the absence of which is indeed the greatest vice, but the affections themselves are not esteemed in any considerable degree virtuous. The same reflection will also convince us, that these desires or affections are not produced by choice, with a view to obtain this private good.

In like manner, if no volition of ours can directly raise affections from the former prospects of interest, no more can any volition raise them from prospects of eternal rewards, or to avoid eternal punishments. The former motives differ from these only as smaller from greater, shorter from more durable. If affections could be directly raised by volition, the same consideration would make us angry at the most innocent or virtuous character, and jealous of the most faithful and affectionate, or sorrowful for the prosperity of a friend; which we all find to be impossible. The prospect of a future state, may, no doubt, have a greater indirect influence, by turning our attention to the qualities in the objects naturally apt to raise the required affection, than any other consideration*.

* These several motives of interest, which, some allege, do excite us to benevolence, operate upon us in a very

'Tis indeed probably true in fact, that those who are engaged by prospect of future rewards to do good offices to mankind, have generally the virtuous benevolence jointly exciting them to action; because, as it may appear hereafter, benevolence is natural to mankind, and still operates where there is no opposition of apparent interest, or where any contrary apparent in-

different manner. Prospect of external advantage of any kind in this life from our fellows, is only a motive to the volition of external actions immediately, and not to raise desire of the happiness of others. Now being willing to do external actions which we know do in fact promote the happiness of others, without any desire of their happiness, is not approved as virtuous: otherwise it were virtue to do a beneficent action for a bribe of money.

The prospect of rewards from the Deity, of future pleasures from the self-approbation of our moral sense, or of any pleasure attending an affection itself, are only motives to us to desire or wish to have the affection of benevolence in our hearts; and consequently, if our volition could raise affections in us, these motives would make us will or choose to raise benevolent affections: but these prospects cannot be motives to us from self-love, to desire the happiness of others; for, from self-love we only desire what we apprehend to be the means of private good. Now the having those affections is the means of obtaining these private goods, and not the actual happiness of others; for the pleasure of self-approbation, and divine rewards, are not obtained or lost according as others are happy or miserable, but according to the goodness of our affections. If therefore affections are not directly raised by volition or choice, prospects of future rewards, or of self-approbation, cannot directly raise them.

terest is overbalanced by a greater interest. Men, conscious of this, do generally approve good offices, to which motives of a future state partly excited the agent. But that the approbation is founded upon the apprehension of a disinterested desire partly exciting the agent, is plain from this, that not only obedience to an evil deity in doing mischief, or even in performing trifling ceremonies, only from hope of reward, or prospect of avoiding punishment, but even obedience to a good Deity only from the same motives, without any love or gratitude towards him, and with a perfect indifference about the happiness or misery of mankind, abstracting from this private interest, would meet with no approbation. We plainly see that a change of external circumstances of interest under an evil Deity, without any change in the disposition of the agent, would lead him into every cruelty and inhumanity.

Gratitude toward the Deity is indeed disinterested, as it will appear hereafter. This affection therefore may obtain our approbation, where it excites to action, though there were no other benevolence exciting the agent. But this case scarce occurs among men. But where the sanction of the law is the only motive of action, we could expect no more benevolence, nor no other affection, than those in one forced by the law to be curator to a person for whom he has not the least regard. The agent would so manage as to save himself harmless if he could, but would be under no concern about the success of his attempts, or the happiness

of the person whom he served, provided he performed the task required by law; nor would any spectator approve this conduct.

V. THE other scheme is more plausible: that benevolence is not raised by any volition upon prospect of advantage; but that we desire the happiness of others, as conceiving it necessary to procure some pleasant sensations which we expect to feel upon seeing others happy; and that for like reason we have aversion to their misery. This connection between the happiness of others and our pleasure, say they, is chiefly felt among friends, parents and children, and eminently virtuous characters. But this benevolence flows as directly from self-love as any other desire.

The second opinion confuted.

To shew that this scheme is not true in fact, let us consider, that if in our benevolence we only desired the happiness of others as the means of this pleasure to ourselves, whence is it that no man approves the desire of the happiness of others as a means of procuring wealth or sensual pleasure to ourselves? If a person had wagered concerning the future happiness of a man of such veracity, that he would sincerely confess whether he were happy or not; would this wagerer's desire of the happiness of another, in order to win the wager, be approved as virtuous? If not, wherein does this desire differ from the former? except that in one case there is one pleasant sensation expected, and in the other case other sensations: for by increasing or di-

minishing the sum wagered, the interest in this case may be made either greater or less than that in the other.

Reflecting on our own minds again will best discover the truth. Many have never thought upon this connection : nor do we ordinarily intend the obtaining of any such pleasure when we do generous offices. We all often feel delight upon seeing others happy, but during our pursuit of their happiness we have no intention of obtaining this delight. We often feel the pain of compassion ; but were our sole ultimate intention or desire the freeing ourselves from this pain, would the Deity offer to us either wholly to blot out all memory of the person in distress, to take away this connection, so that we should be easy during the misery of our friend on the one hand, or on the other would relieve him from his misery, we should be as ready to choose the former way as the latter ; since either of them would free us from our pain, which upon this scheme is the sole end proposed by the compassionate person. — Don't we find in ourselves that our desire does not terminate upon the removal of our own pain ? Were this our sole intention, we would run away, shut our eyes, or divert our thoughts from the miserable object, as the readiest way of removing our pain : this we seldom do, nay, we crowd about such objects, and voluntarily expose ourselves to this pain, unless calm reflection upon our inability to relieve the miserable, countermand our inclination, or some selfish affection, as fear of danger, over-power it.

To make this yet clearer, suppose that the Deity should declare to a good man that he should be suddenly annihilated, but at the instant of his exit it should be left to his choice whether his friend, his children, or his country should be made happy or miserable for the future, when he himself could have no sense of either pleasure or pain from their state. Pray would he be any more indifferent about their state now, that he neither hoped or feared any thing to himself from it, than he was in any prior period of his life *? Nay, is it not a pretty common opinion among us, that after our decease we know nothing of what befalls those who survive us? How comes it then that we do not lose, at the approach of death, all concern for our families, friends, or country? Can there be any instance given of our desiring any thing only as the means of private good, as violently when we know that we shall not enjoy this good many minutes, as if we expected the possession of this good for many years? Is this the way we compute the value of annuities?

How the disinterested desire of the good of others should seem inconceivable, 'tis hard to account: perhaps 'tis owing to the attempts of some great men to give definitions of simple ideas.—Desire, say they, is

* Cic. de Finib. lib. ii. c. 31. *Ista commendatio puero-
rum, memoria et caritas amicitiae, summorum officiorum in
extremo spiritu conservatio, indicat innatam esse homini pro-
bitatem gratuitam, non invitam voluptatibus, nec praemio-
rum mercedibus evocatam, &c.*

uneasiness, or uneasy sensation upon the absence of any good.—Whereas desire is as distinct from uneasiness, as volition is from sensation. Don't they themselves often speak of our desiring to remove uneasiness? Desire then is different from uneasiness, however a sense of uneasiness accompanies it, as extension does the idea of colour, which yet is a very distinct idea. Now wherein lies the impossibility of desiring the happiness of another without conceiving it as the means of obtaining any thing farther, even as we desire our own happiness without farther view? If any alledge, that we desire our own happiness as the means of removing the uneasiness we feel in the absence of happiness, then at least the desire of removing our own uneasiness is an ultimate desire: and why may we not have other ultimate desires?

“But can any being be concerned about the absence of an event which gives it no uneasiness?” Perhaps superior natures desire without uneasy sensation. But what if we cannot? We may be uneasy while a desired event is in suspense, and yet not desire this event only as the means of removing this uneasiness: nay, if we did not desire the event without view to this uneasiness, we should never have brought the uneasiness upon ourselves by desiring it. So likewise we may feel delight upon the existence of a desired event, when yet we did not desire the event only as the means of obtaining this delight; even as we often

receive delight from events which we had an aversion to.

VI. IF any one should ask, since none of these motives of self-interest excite our benevolence, but we are in virtuous actions intending solely the good of others, to what purpose serves our moral sense, our sense of pleasure from the happiness of others? To what purpose serves the wise order of nature, by which virtue is even made generally advantageous in this life? To what end are eternal rewards appointed and revealed? The answer to these questions was given partly already: all these motives may make us desire to have benevolent affections, and consequently turn our attention to those qualities in objects which excite them; they may overbalance all apparent contrary motives, and all temptations to vice. But farther, I hope it will be still thought an end worthy of the Deity, to make the virtuous happy, by a wise constitution of nature, whether the virtuous were in every action intending to obtain this happiness or not. Beneficent actions tend to the public good; it is therefore good and kind to give all possible additional motives to them; and to excite men, who have some weak degrees of good affection, to promote the public good more vigorously by motives of self-interest; or even to excite those who have no virtue at all to external acts of beneficence, and to restrain them from vice*.

* Let it be also remembered, that every consideration suggested in the gospel, as an additional motive to beneficent ac-

From the whole it may appear, that there is in human nature a disinterested ultimate desire of the happiness of others; and that our moral sense determines, is not immediately to be looked upon as the proper motive to virtue, or what would engage our approbation of actions flowing from it alone. We have the promises of this life as well as of the next, and yet the former alone was never thought a virtuous principle. Some texts are also brought to confute this scheme of disinterested affections as the only truly virtuous principle, such as 1 Corinth. ch. xv. ver. 32. which imports no more than this, "That if there were no resurrection, and consequently Christ had not risen, and therefore his religion only an imposture, it had been the greatest folly in the apostle to have exposed himself to persecution:" not that the prospect of a future reward was the only motive to virtue, or that the only affection of mind which made the apostle bear persecution was, hope of reward.

Another text insisted on is, Heb. xi. ver. 6. But this only means, either "that no man can perform religious acts acceptably to God, who does not believe his existence and goodness," which is self-evident: or it is to be understood of embracing the true religion, and adhering to it under the most severe persecutions, which we may allow no man could do without hopes of future reward." Now this does not prove either that our sole, or our strongest incitement to virtuous actions is a prospect of interest, nor even that any action is approved, because it springs from hope of reward.

Heb. xii. ver. 2. is chiefly urged, but with least ground: if we have it well translated, it only asserts, "That the hope of future joy was one incitement to our Saviour in enduring sufferings," not that this was the principal spring of his beneficent actions, or that they were made amiable by arising from it. Nay, this joy may be understood metonymically, for its object, viz. the salvation of mankind. Not to mention an-

us to approve only such actions as virtuous, which are apprehended to proceed partly at least from such desire.

VII. As to malice, human nature seems scarce capable of malicious disinterested hatred, or a sedate ultimate desire of the misery of others, when

*Human nature
incapable of se-
date malice.*

we imagine them no way pernicious to us, or opposite to our interest: and for that hatred which makes us oppose those whose interests are opposite to ours, it is only the effect of self-love, and not of disinterested malice. A sudden passion may give us wrong representations of our fellow-creatures, and for a little time re-

other translation long ago known to critics; some of whom insist that *ἀντι* is seldom used for the final cause; but means *instead of*, in this place, as well as in texts debated with the Socinians: and then this verse may be thus translated; "Who instead of that joy which was ready at hand, or in his power to have enjoyed, as he had from the beginning, he submitted to the cross." Nor is there any thing to confute this translation; save that some antithesis between our suffering from faith in a reward, and his suffering in like manner, is not kept up so well; as if it were a necessary perfection in the scriptures to abound in such antithesis. For in this translation there is good reasoning, in shewing how our Saviour's sufferings are enhanced by his exchanging a state of joy for them, parallel to Philip. ii. ver. 6, 7.

Whoever would appeal to the general strain of the Christian exhortations, will find disinterested love more inculcated, and motives of gratitude more frequently suggested, than any others.

present them as absolutely evil; and during this imagination perhaps we may give some evidences of disinterested malice: but as soon as we reflect upon human nature, and form just conceptions, this unnatural passion is allayed, and only self-love remains, which may make us, from self-interest, oppose our adversaries.

Every one at present rejoices in the destruction of our pirates; and yet let us suppose a band of such villains cast in upon some desolate island, and that we were assured some fate would confine them there perpetually, so that they should disturb mankind no more: now let us calmly reflect, that these persons are capable of knowledge and counsel, may be happy and joyful, or may be involved in misery, sorrow, and pain; that they may return to a state of love, humanity, kindness, and become friends, citizens, husbands, parents, with all the sweet sentiments which accompany these relations: then let us ask ourselves, when self-love, or regard to the safety of better men, no longer makes us desire their destruction, and when we cease to look upon them under the ideas suggested by fresh resentment of injuries done to us or our friends, as utterly incapable of any good moral quality; whether we would wish them the fate of Cadmus's army, by plunging their swords in each others breast, or a worse fate by the most exquisite tortures; or rather, that they should recover the ordinary affections of men, become kind, compassionate, and friendly; contrive laws, constitu-

tions, governments, properties; and form an honest happy society with marriages, and

“ Relations dear, and all the charities

“ Of father, son, and brother——* ?

I fancy the latter would be the wish of every mortal, notwithstanding our present just abhorrence of them from self-interest, or public love, and desire of promoting the interest of our friends who are exposed to their fury. Now this plainly evidences, that we scarce ever have any sedate malice against any person, or ultimate desire of his misery. Our calm ill-will is only from opposition of interest; or if we can entertain sedate malice, it must be toward a character apprehended necessarily and unalterably evil in a moral sense; such as a sudden passion sometimes represents our enemies to us: yet perhaps no such being occurs to us among the works of a good Deity.

VIII. HAVING offered what may perhaps prove, that neither our esteem or benevolence is founded on self-love, *Other affections disinterested.* or views of interest; let us see “ if some other affections, in which virtue may be placed, do arise from “ self-love;” such as fear, or reverence, arising from an apprehension of goodness, power, and justice. For no body apprehends any virtue in base dread and servitude toward a powerful evil being: this is indeed the

* Milt. Par. Lost, B. iv. ver. 756.

meanest selfishness. Now the same arguments which prove esteem to be disinterested, will prove this honourable reverence to be so too; for it plainly arises from an apprehension of amiable qualities in the person, and love toward him, which raises an abhorrence of offending him. Could we reverence a being because it was our interest to do so, a third person might bribe us into reverence toward a being neither good, nor powerful, which every one sees to be a jest. And this we might shew to be common to all other passions, which have been reputed virtuous.

Objections. IX. THERE is one objection against disinterested good-will, which occurs from considering, "That nothing so effectually excites our love toward rational agents, as their beneficence, and especially toward ourselves; whence we are led to imagine, that our love of persons, as well as irrational objects, flows intirely from self-interest." But let us here examine ourselves more narrowly. Do we only wish well to the beneficent, because it is our interest to do so? Or do we choose to love them, because our love is the means of procuring their bounty? If it be so, then we could indifferently love any character, even to obtain the bounty of a third person; or we could be bribed by a third person to love the greatest villain heartily, as we may be bribed to external offices: now this is plainly impossible. Nay, farther, is not our good-will the consequent of bounty, and not the means of procuring it? External shew, obsequiousness, and

disimulation may precede an opinion of beneficence ; but real love always presupposes it, and will necessarily arise even when we expect no more, from consideration of past benefits.

Or can any one say he only loves the beneficent, as he does a field or garden, because of its advantage ? His love then must cease toward one who has ruined himself in kind offices to him, when he can do him no more ; as we cease to love an inanimate object which ceases to be useful, unless a poetical *prosopopoeia* animate it, and raise an imaginary gratitude, which is indeed pretty common. Beneficence then must increase our good-will, as it raises complacence, which is still attended with stronger degrees of benevolence : and hence we love even those who are beneficent to others.

In the benefits which we receive ourselves, we are more fully sensible of their value, and of the circumstances of the action, which are evidences of a generous temper in the donor ; and from the good opinion we have of ourselves, we are apt to look upon the kindness as better-employed, than when it is bestowed on others, of whom perhaps we have less favourable sentiments. It is however sufficient to remove the objection, that bounty from a donor apprehended as morally evil, or extorted by force, or conferred with some view of self-interest, will not procure real good-will ; nay, it may raise indignation, if we suspect dissimulation of love, or a design to allure us into any thing dishonourable :

whereas wisely employed bounty is always approved, and gains love to the author from all who hear of it.

Virtue disinterested. No ultimate good-will toward persons arises from self-love, or views of interest, and all virtue flows from such good-will, or some other affection equally disinterested; it remains, "That there must be some other affection than self-love, or interest, which excites us to the actions we call virtuous."

Had we no other ultimate desire but that of private advantage, we must imagine that every rational being acts only for its own advantage; and however we may call a beneficent being a good being, because it acts for our advantage, yet upon this scheme we should not be apt to think there is any beneficent being in nature, or a being who acts for the good of others. Particularly, if there is no sense of excellence in public love, and promoting the happiness of others, whence should this persuasion arise, "That the Deity will make the virtuous happy?" Can we prove that it is for the advantage of the Deity to do so? This I fancy will be looked upon as very absurd, by many who yet expect mercy and beneficence in the Deity. And if there be such dispositions in the Deity, where is the impossibility of some small degree of this public love in his creatures? And why must they be supposed incapable of acting but from self-love?

In short, without acknowledging some other principle of action in rational agents than self-love, I see

no foundation to expect beneficence, or rewards from God or man, farther than it is the interest of the benefactor; and all expectation of benefits from a being whose interests are independent on us, must be perfectly ridiculous. What should engage the Deity to reward virtue? Virtue is commonly supposed, upon this scheme, to be only a consulting our own happiness in the most artful way, consistently with the good of the whole; and in vice the same thing is foolishly pursued, in a manner which will not so probably succeed, and which is contrary to the good of the whole. But how is the Deity concerned in this whole, if every agent always acts from self-love? And what ground have we, from the idea of infinite power and art, to believe the Deity is good in the Christian sense, that is, studious of the good of his creatures? Perhaps the misery of his creatures may give him as much pleasure, as their happiness: and who can find fault, or blame such a being to study their misery? for what else should we expect? A Manichean evil god, is a notion which men would as readily run into, as that of a good one, if there is no excellence in disinterested love, and no being acts but for its own advantage; unless we proved, that the happiness of creatures was advantageous to the Deity.

X. HAVING removed these false springs of virtuous actions, let us next establish the true one, viz. some determination of our nature to study the good of others; or some instinct, antecedent to all reason from interest,

*The true spring
of virtue.*

which influences us to the love of others; even as the moral sense, * above explained, determines us to approve the actions which flow from this love in ourselves or others. This disinterested affection, may appear strange to men impressed with notions of self-love, as the sole spring of action, from the pulpit, the schools, the systems, and conversations regulated by them: but let us consider it in its strongest and simplest kinds; and when we see the possibility of it in these instances, we may easily discover its universal extent.

Natural affection. An honest farmer will tell you, that he studies the preservation and happiness of his children, and loves them without any design of good to himself. But say some of our philosophers, "The happiness of their children gives parents pleasure, and their misery gives them pain; and therefore to obtain the former, and avoid the latter, they study, from self-love, the good of their children." Suppose several merchants joined in partnership of their whole effects; one of them is employed abroad in managing the stock of the company; his prosperity occasions gain to all, and his losses give them pain for their share in the loss: is this then the same kind of affection with that of parents to their children? Is there the same tender, personal regard? I fancy no parent will say so. In this case of merchants there is a plain conjunction of interest; but whence the conjunction of

* See sect. i.

interest between the parent and child? Do the child's sensations give pleasure or pain to the parent? Is the parent hungry, thirsty, sick, when his children are so? No; but his naturally implanted desire of their good, and aversion to their misery, makes him be affected with joy or sorrow from their pleasures or pains. This desire then is antecedent to the conjunction of interest, and the cause of it, not the effect: it then must be disinterested. "No; say others, children are parts of ourselves, and in loving them we but love ourselves in them." A very good answer! Let us carry it as far as it will go. How are they parts of ourselves? Not as a leg or an arm: we are not conscious of their sensations. "But their bodies were formed from parts of ours." So is a fly, or a maggot, which may breed in any discharged blood or humour: very dear insects surely! there must be something else then which makes children parts of ourselves; and what is this but that affection, which nature determines us to have toward them? This love makes them parts of ourselves, and therefore does not flow from their being so before. This is indeed a good metaphor; and where-ever we find a determination among several rational agents to mutual love, let each individual be looked upon as a part of a great whole, or system, and concern himself in the public good of it.

Another author thinks all this easily deducible from self-love. "Children are not only made of our bodies, but resemble us in body and mind; they are rati-

“nal agents as we are, and we only love our own
“likeness in them.” Very good all this. What is
likeness? ’Tis not individual sameness; ’tis only be-
ing included under one general or specific idea. Thus
there is likeness between us and other mens children,
thus any man is like any other, in some respects; a
man is also like an angel, and in some respects like a
brute. Is there then a natural disposition in every man
to love his like, to wish well not only to his individual
self, but to any other like rational or sensitive being?
and this disposition strongest, where there is the great-
est likeness in the more noble qualities? If all this is
called by the name of self-love; be it so: the highest
mythic needs no more disinterested principle; ’tis not
confined to the individual, but terminates ultimately on
the good of others, and may extend to all; since each
one some way resembles each other. Nothing can be
better than this self-love, nothing more generous.

If any allege, that “parents always derive pleasure,
“often honour, and sometimes wealth, from the wis-
“dom and prosperity of their children, and hence all
“parental solicitude arises;” let us recollect what was
said above; all these motives cease upon approach of
death, and yet the affection is as strong then as ever.
Let parents examine their own hearts, and see if these
views are the only springs of their affection, and that
toward the most infirm, from whom there is least
hope.

But a later author observes, * “ That natural affection in parents is weak, till the children begin to give evidences of knowledge and affections.” Mothers say they feel it strong from the very first : and yet I could wish, for the destruction of his hypothesis, that what he alledges was true ; as I fancy it is in some measure, tho’ we may find in some parents an affection toward idiots. The observing of understanding and affections in children, which make them appear moral agents, can increase love toward them without prospect of interest ; for I hope, this increase of love is not from prospect of advantage from the knowledge or affection of children, for whom parents are still toiling, and never intend to be refunded their expences, or recompensed for their labour, but in cases of extreme necessity. If then the observing a moral capacity can be the occasion of increasing love without self-interest, even from the frame of our nature ; pray, may not this be a foundation of weaker degrees of love, where there is no preceding tie of parentage, and extend it to all mankind ?

XI. AND that this is so in fact, will appear by considering some more distant attachments. If we observe any neighbours, from whom perhaps we have received no good offices, formed into friendships, familys, partnerships, and with honesty and kindness assisting each other ; pray ask any mortal, if he would not more desire their

*Public affec-
tions natural.*

prosperity, when their interests are no way inconsistent with his own, than their misery and ruin? and you shall find a bond of benevolence farther extended than a family and children, altho' the ties are not so strong. Again, suppose a person, for trade, hath left his native country, and with all his kindred had settled his fortunes abroad, without any view of returning; and only imagine he had received no injurys from his country: ask such a man, would he not rather desire the prosperity of his country? Or could he, now that his interests are separated from that of his nation, as readily wish that it was laid waste by tyranny, or a foreign power? I fancy his answer would shew us a benevolence extended beyond neighbourhoods or acquaintances. Let a man of a composed temper, out of the hurry of his private affairs, only read of the constitution of a foreign country, even in the most distant parts of the earth, and observe art, design, and a study of public good in the laws of this association; and he shall find his mind moved in their favour; he shall be contriving rectifications and amendments in their constitution, and regret any unlucky part of it, which may be pernicious to their interest; he shall bewail any disaster which befalls them, and accompany all their fortunes with the affections of a friend. Now this proves benevolence to be in some degree extended to all mankind, where there is no interfering interest, which from self-love may obstruct it. And had we any notions of rational agents, capable of moral affections,

in the most distant planets, our good wishes would still attend them, and we should desire their happiness. And that all these affections, whether more or less extensive, are properly disinterested, not even founded on any desire of that happiness we may expect in seeing their prosperous condition; may appear from this, that they would continue even at the instant of our death, or intire destruction, as was already observed, Art. IV. of this section.

XII. HERE we may transiently remark the foundation of what we call national love, *National love.* or love of one's native country. Whatever place we have lived in for any considerable time, there we have most distinctly remarked the various affections of human nature; we have known many lovely characters; we remember the associations, friendships, families, natural affections, and other human sentiments: our moral sense determines us to approve these lovely dispositions, where we have most distinctly observed them; and our benevolence concerns us in the interests of those persons possessed of them. When we come to observe the like as distinctly in another country, we begin to acquire a national love toward it also; nor has our own country any other preference in our idea, unless it be by an association of the pleasant ideas of our youth, with the buildings, fields, and woods where we received them. This may let us see how tyranny, faction, a neglect of justice, a corruption of manners, and any thing which occasions the misery of the sub-

jects, destroys this national love, and the dear idea of a country.

The reason why natural affections do not always appear.

WE ought here to observe, That the only reason of that apparent want of natural affection, among collateral relations, is, that these natural inclinations, in many cases, are overpowered by self-love, where there happens any opposition of interests; but where this does not happen, we shall find all mankind under its influence, tho' with different degrees of strength, according to the nearer or more remote relations they stand in to each other; and according as the natural affection of benevolence is joined with and strengthened by esteem, gratitude, compassion, or other kind affections; or on the contrary, weakened by displicence, anger, or envy.

S E C T. III.

The Sense of Virtue, and the various Opinions about it, reducible to one general foundation. The Manner of computing the Morality of Actions.

I. IF we examine all the actions which are counted amiable any-where, and inquire into the grounds upon which they are approved, we shall find that in the opinion of the person who approves them, they generally appear as benevolent, or flowing from good-will to others, and a study of their happiness, whether the approver be one of the persons beloved, or profited, or not; so that all those kind affections which incline us to make others happy, and all actions supposed to flow from such affections, appear morally good, if, while they are benevolent towards some persons, they be not pernicious to others. Nor shall we find any thing amiable in any action whatsoever, where there is no benevolence imagined; nor in any disposition, or capacity, which is not supposed applicable to, and designed for, benevolent purposes. Nay, as was before observed,* the actions which in fact are exceedingly useful, shall appear void of moral beauty, if we know they proceeded from no kind intentions towards others; and yet an unsuc-

*All virtue
benevolent.*

* See sect. ii. art. 3. par. 1. art. 9. par. 2.

Successful attempt of kindness, or of promoting public good, shall appear as amiable as the most successful, if it flowed from as strong benevolence.

Religion. II. Hence those affections, which would lead us to do good to our benefactor, shall appear amiable, and the contrary affections odious, even when our actions cannot possibly be of any advantage or hurt to him. Thus a sincere love and gratitude toward our benefactor, a chearful readiness to do whatever he shall require, how burdensome soever, a hearty inclination to comply with his intentions, and contentment with the state he has placed us in, are the strongest evidences of benevolence we can shew to such a person; and therefore they must appear exceedingly amiable. And under these is included all the rational devotion, or religion toward a deity apprehended as good, which we can possibly perform.

We may here transiently observe one circumstance in the frame of our nature, which is wonderfully adapted to promote benevolence, viz. That as a benefit conferred necessarily raises gratitude in the person who receives it, so the expressions of this gratitude, even from the meanest of mankind, are wonderfully delightful to the benefactor. Never were there any mortals so poor, so inconsiderable, whose grateful praise would not be some way delightful; and by whom we would not rather choose to be beloved than hated, if their love no way evidenced us to be partners in their vices, or concerned in their meanness. And thus the most

abject person obliged is capable, and inclined to make no small addition to our happiness by his love and gratitude, when he is utterly incapable of any other return, and when we expect none from him: Thus,

A grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharged——— *

As to external performances of religion, they are no doubt very various in different nations and ages; and education may give men opinions, that certain actions are pleasing, and others displeasing to the Deity: but then, where-ever any external rite of worship is approved, there also it is looked upon to proceed from love toward the Deity, or some other affection necessarily joined with love, as reverence, repentance, or sorrow to have offended. So that the general principle of love is the foundation of all the apparent moral excellence, even in the most fantastic rites of worship which were ever approved. For as to rites designed only to appease a furious being, no mortal, I fancy, apprehends there is any virtue, or excellence in them; but that they are chosen only as the dishonourable means of avoiding a greater evil. Now as there are various opinions about what is acceptable to the Deity, it necessarily follows, "That, accordingly, practices, and approbati-

* *Paradise Lost*, book iv. line 55.

“on, must be various; tho’ all the moral goodness of
“actions is still presumed to flow from love.”

III. AGAIN, that we may see how bene-
Social volence is the foundation of all apprehended
Virtues. excellence in social virtues, let us only ob-
serve, that amidst the diversity of sentiments on this
head among various sects, this is still allowed to be the
way of deciding the controversy about any disputed
practice, viz. to inquire whether this conduct, or the
contrary, will most effectually promote the public good.
The morality is immediately adjusted, when the nat-
ural tendency, or influence of the action upon the
universal natural good of mankind, is agreed upon.
That which produces more good than evil in the
whole, is acknowledged good; and what does not, is
counted evil. In this case, we no other way regard
the good of the actor, or that of those who are thus
inquiring, than as they make a part of the great sys-
tem.

In our late debates about passive obedience, and
the right of resistance in defence of privileges, the
point disputed among men of sense was, “Whether
“universal submission would probably be attended
“with greater natural evils, than temporary insurrec-
“tions, when privileges are invaded? and not, Whe-
“ther what tended in the whole to the public natural
“good, was also morally good?” And if a divine
command was alledged in favour of the doctrine of
passive obedience, this would, no doubt, by its eternal

sanctions cast the balance of natural good to its own side, and determine our election from interest; and yet our sense of the moral good in passive obedience, would still be founded upon some species of benevolence, such as gratitude toward the Deity, and submission to his will to whom we are so much obliged. But I fancy those, who believe the Deity to be good, would not rashly alledge such a command, unless they also asserted, that the thing commanded did tend more to the universal good, than the contrary, either by preventing the external evils of civil war, or by enuring men to patience, or some other quality which they apprehended necessary to their everlasting happiness. And were it not so, passive obedience might be recommended as an inglorious method of escaping a greater mischief, but could never have any thing morally amiable in it.

But let us quit the disputes of the learned, on whom, it may be alledged, custom and education have a powerful influence; and consider upon what grounds, in common life, actions are approved or condemned, vindicated or excused. We are universally ashamed to say an action is just, because it tends to my advantage, or to the advantage of the actor: and we as seldom condemn a beneficent kind action, because it is not advantageous to us, or to the actor. Blame and censure are founded on a tendency to public evil, or a principle of private malice in the agent, or neglect at least of the good of others; on inhumanity of temper, or

at least such strong selfishness as makes the agent careless of the sufferings of others : and thus we blame and censure when the action no way affects ourselves. All the moving and persuasive vindications of actions, which may, from some partial evil tendency, appear evil, are taken from this, that they were necessary to some greater good, which counterbalanced the evil : “ Severity toward a few, is compassion toward multitudes.—Transitory punishments are necessary for avoiding more durable evils.—Did not some suffer on such occasions, there would be no living for honest men,”—and such like. And even when an action cannot be intirely justify’d, yet how greatly is the guilt extenuated, if we can alledge, “ That it was only the effect of inadvertence without malice, or of partial good nature, friendship, compassion, natural affection, or love of a party ?” All these considerations shew, what is the universal foundation of our sense of moral good, or evil, viz. benevolence toward others on the one hand, and malice, or even indolence, and unconcernedness about the manifest public evil on the other. And let it be here observed, that we are so far from imagining all men to act only from self-love, that we universally expect in others a regard for the public ; and do not look upon the want of this, as barely the absence of moral good, or virtue, but even as positively evil and hateful.

IV. CONTRARYS may illustrate each other; let us therefore observe the general foundation of our sense of moral evil more particularly. *Moral evil not always malice.* Disinterested malice, or ultimate desire of the misery of others, is the highest pitch of what we count vitious; and every action appears evil, which is imagined to flow from any degree of this affection. Perhaps a violent passion may hurry men into it for a few moments, and our rash angry sentiments of our enemys, may represent them as having such odious dispositions; but it is very probable, from the reasons offered above, * that there is no such degree of wickedness in human nature, as, in cold blood, to desire the misery of others, when it is conceived no way useful to our interest.

The story of Nero and Paetus may be alledged against this, but perhaps unjustly, even allowing the fact to be true. Nero was conscious he was hated by those whom the world called good men, and that they were dangerous to him; he fancied his best security lay in being terrible, and appearing such on all occasions, by making others miserable when he pleased, to let his enemies see, that they should have no security from that compassion which a Nero would imagine argued weakness. This unfortunate gentleman's happiness might by some foolish courtier be so related, as to carry a reproof of the tyrant's unnatural pursuits.

* See section ii. art. 4.

whereby his passion might be excited to cut off the person admired, and preferred before him. Any of these motives of apparent interest seem more probably to have influenced him, than that we should in him, and a few others, suppose a principle of calm malice without interest, of which the rest of mankind seem intirely incapable.

*Temper of
a tyrant.*

The temper of a tyrant seems probably to be a continued state of anger, hatred, and fear. To form our judgment then of his motives of action, and those of men of like tempers in lower stations, let us reflect upon the apprehensions we form of mankind, when we are under any of those passions which to the tyrant are habitual. When we are under the fresh impressions of an injury, we plainly find, that our minds are wholly filled with apprehensions of the person who injured us, as if he were absolutely evil, and delighted in doing mischief: we overlook the virtues, which, when calm, we could have observed in him: we forget that perhaps he acted from self-love, and not malice, or, it may be, some generous or kind intention toward others. These, probably, are the opinions which a tyrant constantly forms concerning mankind; and having very much weakened all kind affections in himself, however he may pretend to them, he judges of the tempers of others by his own. And were men really such as he apprehends them, his treatment of them would not be very unreasonable. We shall generally find our passi-

ons arising suitably to the apprehensions we form of others: if these be rashly formed upon some sudden slight views, it is no wonder if we find dispositions following upon them, very little suited to the real state of human nature.

The ordinary springs of vice then among men, must be a mistaken self-love, made so *Ordinary springs of vice.* violent, as to overcome benevolence; or affections arising from false, and rashly-formed opinions of mankind, which we run into thro' the weakness of our benevolence. When men, who had good opinions of each other, happen to have contrary interests, they are apt to have their good opinions of each other abated, by imagining a designed opposition from malice; without this, they can scarcely hate one another. Thus two candidates for the same office wish each other dead, because that is an ordinary way by which men make room for each other; but if there remains any reflection on each other's virtue, as there sometimes may in benevolent tempers, then their opposition may be without hatred; and if another better post, where there is no competition, were bestowed on one of them, the other shall rejoice at it.

V. THE actions which flow solely from self-love, and yet evidence no want of benevolence, having no hurtful effects *Self-love indifferent.* upon others, seem perfectly indifferent in a moral sense, and neither raise the love or hatred of the observer. Our reason can indeed discover certain bounds, within

which we may not only act from self-love, consistently with the good of the whole; but every mortal's acting thus within these bounds for his own good, is absolutely necessary for the good of the whole; and the want of such self-love would be universally pernicious. Hence, he who pursues his own private good, with an intention also to concur with that constitution which tends to the good of the whole; and much more he who promotes his own good, with a direct view of making himself more capable of serving God, or doing good to mankind; acts not only innocently, but also honourably, and virtuously: for in both these cases, benevolence concurs with self-love to excite him to the action. And thus a neglect of our own good may be morally evil, and argue a want of benevolence toward the whole. But when self-love breaks over the bounds above-mentioned, and leads us into actions detrimental to others, and to the whole; or makes us insensible of the generous kind affections; then it appears vitious, and is disapproved. So also, when upon any small injurys, or sudden resentment, or any weak superstitious suggestions, our benevolence becomes so faint, as to let us entertain odious conceptions of men, or any part of them, without just ground, as if they were wholly evil, or malicious, or as if they were a worse sort of beings than they really are; these conceptions must lead us into malevolent affections, or at least weaken our good ones, and makes us really vitious.

VI. BENEVOLENCE is a word fit enough in general, to denote the internal spring of virtue, as bishop Cumberland always uses it. But to understand this more distinctly, 'tis highly necessary to observe, that under this name are included very different dispositions of the soul. Sometimes it denotes a calm, extensive affection, or good-will toward all beings capable of happiness or misery: sometimes, 2. A calm deliberate affection of the soul toward the happiness of certain smaller systems or individuals: such as patriotism, or love of a country, friendship, parental affection, as it is in persons of wisdom and self-government: or, 3. The several kind particular passions of love, pity, sympathy, congratulation. This distinction between the calm motions of the will, affections, dispositions, or instincts of the soul, and the several turbulent passions, is elsewhere more fully considered.*

Now though all these different dispositions come under the general character of benevolent, yet as they are in nature different, so they have very different degrees of moral beauty. The first sort is above all amiable and excellent: 'tis perhaps the sole moral perfection of some superior natures; and the more this prevails and rules in any human mind, the more amiable the person appears, even when it not only checks and

* See Treatise III. sect. ii. art. 3, and Treatise IV. sect. vi. art. iv.

limits our lower appetites, but when it controuls our kind particular passions, or counteracts them. The second sort of benevolence is more amiable than the third, when it is sufficiently strong to influence our conduct: and the third sort, tho' of a lesser moral dignity, is also beautiful, when it is no way opposite to these more noble principles. And when it is opposite, tho' it does not justify such actions as are really detrimental to greater systems, yet it is a strong extenuating circumstance, and much alleviates the moral deformity. We are all sensible of this, when any person from friendship, parental affection, or pity, has done something hurtful to larger societies.

Self-love not excluded by benevolence. VII. HERE we must also observe, that every moral agent justly considers himself as a part of this rational system, which may be useful to the whole; so that he may be, in part, an object of his own universal benevolence. Nay farther, as was hinted above, he may see, that the preservation of the system requires every one to be innocently solicitous about himself. Hence he may conclude, that an action which brings greater evil to the agent, than good to others, however it may evidence the strength of some particular kind attachment, or of a virtuous disposition in the agent, yet it must be founded upon a mistaken opinion of its tendency to public good; so that a man who reasoned justly, and considered the whole, would not be led into it, by the calm extensive benevolence, how strong soever it were;

nor would he recommend it to the practice of others ; however he might acknowledge, that the detriment arising to the agent, from a kind action, did evidence a strong virtuous disposition. Nay farther, if any good was proposed to the pursuit of an agent, and he had a competitor, in every respect only equal to himself ; the highest universal benevolence possible would not lead a wise man to prefer another to himself, were there no ties of gratitude, or some other external circumstance to move him to yield to his competitor. A man surely of the strongest benevolence, may just treat himself as he would do a third person, who was a competitor of equal merit with the other ; and as his preferring one to another, in such a case, would argue no weakness of benevolence ; so, no more would he evidence it by preferring himself to a man of only equal abilities.

Where-ever a regard to myself tends as much to the good of the whole, as regard to another ; or where the evil to myself, is equal to the good obtained for another ; though by acting, in such cases, for the good of another, I really shew a very amiable disposition ; yet by acting in the contrary manner, from regard to myself, I evidence no evil disposition, nor any want of the most extensive benevolence ; since the moment of good to the whole is, in both cases, exactly equal. And let it be here observed, that this does not supersede the necessity of liberality, or gratuitous gifts, although in such actions the giver loses what the other receives ; since the moment of good to any person, is

any given case, is in a compound proportion of the quantity of the good itself, and the indigence of the person. Hence it appears, that a gift may make a much greater addition to the happiness of the receiver, than the diminution it occasions in the happiness of the giver: and that the most useful and important gifts are those from the wealthy to the indigent. Yet gifts from equals are not useless, since they often increase the happiness of both, as they are strong evidences of mutual love: but gifts from the poor to the wealthy are really foolish, unless they be only little expressions of gratitude, which are also fruitful of joy on both sides: for these expressions of gratitude are really delightful and acceptable to the wealthy, if they have any humanity; and their acceptance of them is matter of joy to the poor giver.

In like manner, when an action does more harm to the agent, than good to the public; the doing it evidences an amiable and truly virtuous disposition in the agent, though 'tis plain he acts upon a mistaken view of his duty. But if the private evil to the agent be so great, as to make him incapable, at another time, of promoting a public good of greater moment than what is attained by this action; the action may really be evil, so far as it evidences a prior neglect of a greater attainable public good for a smaller one; though at present this action also flows from a virtuous disposition.

VIII. The moral beauty, or deformity of actions, is not altered by the moral qualitys of the objects any farther than the qualitys of the objects increase or diminish the benevolence of the action, or the public good intended by it. Thus benevolence toward the worst characters, or the study of their good, may be as amiable as any whatsoever; yea, often more so than that toward the good, since it argues such a strong degree of benevolence as can surmount the greatest obstacle, the moral evil in the object. Hence the love of unjust enemies, is counted among the highest virtues. Yet, when our benevolence to the evil encourages them in their bad intentions, or makes them more capable of mischief; this diminishes or destroys the beauty of the action, or even makes it evil, as it betrays a neglect of the good of others more valuable; beneficence toward whom, would have tended more to the public good, than that toward our favourites: but benevolence toward evil characters, which neither encourages nor enables them to do mischief, nor diverts our benevolence from persons more useful, has as much moral beauty as any whatsoever.

*Benevolence,
how affected
by the qualitys
of its object.*

In comparing the moral qualities of actions, in order to regulate our election among various actions proposed, or to find which of them has the greatest moral excellency, we are led by our moral sense of virtue to judge thus; that in equal degrees of happiness,

*Qualities determining our
election.*

expected to proceed from the action, the virtue is in proportion to the number of persons to whom the happiness shall extend; (and here the dignity, or moral importance of persons, may compensate numbers) and in equal numbers, the virtue is as the quantity of the happiness, or natural good; or that the virtue is in a compound ratio of the quantity of good, and number of enjoyers. In the same manner, the moral evil, or vice, is as the degree of misery, and number of sufferers; so that that action is best, which procures the greatest happiness for the greatest numbers; and that worst, which, in like manner, occasions misery,

Again, when the consequences of actions are of a mixed nature, partly advantageous, and partly pernicious; that action is good, whose good effects preponderate the evil by being useful to many, and pernicious to few; and that evil, which is otherwise. Here also the moral importance of characters, or dignity of persons may compensate numbers; as may also the degrees of happiness or misery: for to procure an inconsiderable good to many, but an immense evil to few, may be evil; and an immense good to few, may preponderate a small evil to many.

*Consequences,
how they af-
fect the mora-
lity of acti-
ons.*

But the consequences which affect the morality of actions, are not only the direct and natural effects of the actions themselves; but also all those events which otherwise would not have happened. For many actions

which have no immediate or natural evil effects, nay, which actually produce good effects, may be evil; if a man foresees, that the evil consequences, which will probably flow from the folly of others, upon his doing of such actions, are so great as to overbalance all the good produced by those actions, or all the evils which would flow from the omission of them: and in such cases the probability is to be computed on both sides. Thus, if an action of mine will probably, thro' the mistake or corruption of others, be made a precedent in unlike cases, to very evil actions; or when my action, tho' good in itself, will probably provoke men to very evil actions, upon some mistaken notion of their right; any of these considerations foreseen by me, may make such an action of mine evil, whenever the evils which will probably be occasioned by the action, are greater than the evils occasioned by the omission.

And this is the reason, that many laws prohibit actions in general, even when some particular instances of those actions would be very useful; because an universal allowance of them, considering the mistakes men would probably fall into, would be more pernicious than an universal prohibition; nor could there be any more special boundarys fix'd between the right and wrong cases. In such cases, it is the duty of persons to comply with the generally useful constitution; or if in some very important instances, the violation of the law would be of less evil consequence, than obedience to it, they must patiently resolve to undergo those pe-

nalties, which the state has, for valuable ends to the whole, appointed : and this disobedience will have nothing criminal in it.

IX. 'Tis here to be observed, that tho' every kind affection abstractly considered, is approved by our moral sense, yet all sorts of affections or passions which pursue the good of others are not equally approved, or do not seem in the same degree virtuous. Our calm affections, either private or public, are plainly distinct from our particular passions ; calm self-love quite distinct from hunger, thirst, ambition, lust, or anger ; so calm good-will toward others is different from pity, passionate love, the parental affection, or the passion of particular friends. Now every kind passion, which is not pernicious to others, is indeed approved as virtuous and lovely : and yet a calm good-will toward the same persons appears more lovely. So calm good-will toward a small system is lovely and preferable to more passionate attachments ; and yet a more extensive calm benevolence is still more beautiful and virtuous ; and the highest perfection of virtue is an universal calm good-will toward all sensitive natures. Hence it is, that we condemn particular attachments, when inconsistent with the interest of great societies, because they argue some defect in that more noble principle, which is the perfection of virtue*.

* See Essay on Passions, section 2. art. 3. And Illustrations, section vi. art. 4.

X. From these observations, we may see what actions our moral sense would most recommend to our election, as the most perfectly virtuous: viz. such as appear to have the most universal unlimited tendency to the greatest and most extensive happiness of all the rational agents, to whom our influence can reach. All beneficence, even toward a part, is amiable, when not inconsistent with the good of the whole: but this is a smaller degree of virtue, unless our beneficence be restrained by want of power, and not want of love to the whole. All strict attachments to partys, sects, factions, have but an imperfect species of beauty, even when the good of the whole requires a stricter attachment to a part, as in natural affection, or virtuous friendships; except when some parts are so eminently useful to the whole, that even universal benevolence does determine us with special care and affection to study their interests. Thus universal benevolence would incline us to a more strong concern for the interests of great and generous characters in a high station, or make us more earnestly study the interests of any generous society, whose whole constitution was contrived to promote universal good. Thus a good fancy in architecture would lead a man, who was not able to bear the expence of a completely regular building, to choose such a degree of ornament as he could keep uniformly thro' the whole, and not move him to make a vain unfinished attempt in one part, of what he foresaw he

*Partial benevolence,
how virtuous.*

could not succeed in as to the whole. And he would condemn a great profusion of ornament on one part, above the proportion of the whole, unless that part be some eminent place of the edifice, such as the chief front, or public entrance; the adorning of which, would beautify the whole, more than an equal expence of ornament on any other part.

This constitution of our sense, whereby the moral beauty of actions, or dispositions, increases according to the number of persons to whom the good effects of them extend; whence also actions which flow from the nearer attachments of nature, such as that between the sexes, and the love of our offspring, do not appear so virtuous as actions of equal moment of good towards persons less attached to us; has been chosen by the Author of nature for this good reason, "That the more
 " limited instincts tend to produce a smaller moment
 " of good, because confined to small numbers; where-
 " as the more extensive calm instinct of good-will, at-
 " tended with power, would have no bounds in its
 " good effects, and would never lead into any evil, as
 " the particular passions may: and hence it is made
 " more lovely to our sense, that we might be induced
 " to cultivate and strengthen it; and make it check
 " even kind passions, when they are opposite to a
 " greater good."

Moral dispositi- From this primary idea of moral
ons and abilitys. good in actions, may arise a notion of
 moral good in those dispositions, whe-
 ther natural or acquired, which enable us to do good to

others; or which are presumed to be designed, and acquired or cultivated for that purpose; or are natural indications of a good temper, and usually accompany it. And hence those abilities, while nothing appears contrary to our presumption, may increase our approbation of the possessor of them; but when they are imagined to be intended for public mischief, they make us hate him the more: such are a penetrating judgment, a tenacious memory, a quick invention; patience of labour, pain, hunger, watching; a contempt of wealth, rumour, death. These may be rather called natural abilities, than moral qualities: and we seem to have a natural relish for them distinct from moral approbation. But if we plainly see them maliciously employed, they make the agent more detestable.

XI. To find an universal rule to compute the morality of any actions, with all their circumstances, when we judge of the actions done by ourselves, or by others, we must observe the following propositions, or axioms.

How we compute the morality of actions in our sense of them.

I. The moral importance of any agent, or the quantity of public good he produces, is in a compound proportion of his benevolence and abilities. For 'tis plain that his good offices depend upon these two jointly. In like manner, the quantity of private good which any agent obtains for himself, is in a like compound proportion of his selfish principles, and his abilities. We speak here only of the external goods of this world,

which one pursues from some selfish principles. For as to internal goods of the mind, these are most effectually obtained by the exercise of other affections than those called selfish, even those which carry the agent beyond himself toward the good of others.

2. In comparing the virtues of different agents, when the abilities are equal, the moments of public good are proportioned to the goodness of the temper, or the benevolence; and when the tempers are equal, the quantities of good are as the abilities.

3. The virtue then or goodness of temper is directly as the moment of good, when other circumstances are equal, and inversely as the abilities. That is to say, where the abilities are greatest, there is less virtue evidenced in any given moment of good produced.

4. But, as the natural consequences of our actions are various, some good to ourselves, and evil to the public; and others evil to ourselves, and good to the public; or either useful both to ourselves and others, or pernicious to both; the intire spring of good actions is not always benevolence alone; or of evil, malice alone; (nay, sedate malice is rarely found) but in most actions we must look upon self-love as another force, sometimes conspiring with benevolence, and assisting it, when we are excited by views of private interest, as well as public good; and sometimes opposing benevolence, when the good action is any way difficult or painful in the performance, or detrimental in its consequences to the agent.

These selfish motives shall be hereafter * more fully explained; here we may in general denote them by the word *interest*: which when it concurs with benevolence, in any action capable of increase or diminution, must produce a greater quantity of good, than benevolence alone in the same abilitys; and therefore, when the moment of good, in an action partly intended for the good of the agent, is but equal to the moment of good in the action of another agent, influenced only by benevolence, the former is less virtuous; and in this case the interest must be deducted to find the true effect of the benevolence, or virtue. In the same manner, when interest is opposite to benevolence, and yet is surmounted by it; this interest must be added to the moment, to increase the virtue of the action, or the strength of the benevolence. By interest, in this last case, is understood all the advantage which the agent might have obtained by omitting the action, which is a negative motive to it; and this, when subtracted, becomes positive.

But here we must observe, that no advantage, not intended, altho' casually or naturally redounding to us from the action, does at all affect its morality to make it less amiable: nor does any difficulty or evil unforeseen, or not resolved upon, make a kind action more virtuous; since in such cases self-

Intention and foresight, affect actions.

love neither assists nor opposes benevolence. Nay, self-interest then only diminishes the benevolence, when without this view of interest the action would not have been undertaken, or so much good would not have been produced by the agent; and it extenuates the vice of an evil action, only when without this interest the action would not have been done by the agent, or so much evil have been produced by him.

The sixth axiom only explains the external marks by which men must judge, who do not see into each others hearts: for it may really happen in many cases, that men may have benevolence sufficient to surmount any difficulty, and yet they may meet with none at all: and in that case, it is certain there is as much virtue in the agent, tho' he does not give such proof of it to his fellow-creatures, as if he had surmounted difficulties in his kind actions. And this too must be the case with the Deity, to whom nothing is difficult.

Perfect Since then, in judging of the goodness of
virtue. temper in any agent, the abilities must come into computation, as is above-mentioned, and none can act beyond their natural abilities; that must be the perfection of virtue, where the moment of good produced equals the ability, or when the being acts to the utmost of his power for the public good; and hence the perfection of virtue in this case, is as unity. And this may shew us the only foundation for the boasting of the Stoics, "That a creature supposed innocent, by pursuing virtue with his utmost power,

“ may in virtue equal the gods.” For in their case, if the ability be infinite, unless the good to be produced in the whole, be so too, the virtue is not absolutely perfect; and the quotient can never surmount unity.

XII. In the same manner we may compute the degree of depravity of any temper, directly as the moment of evil effected, and inversely as the abilitys. The springs of vicious actions however are seldom any real ultimate intention of mischief, and never ultimate deliberate malice; but only sudden anger, self-love, some selfish passion or appetite, some kind attachments to parties, or particular kind passions. *Moral evil, how computed.*

The motives of interest may sometimes strongly cooperate with a deprav'd temper, or may oppose it, in the same manner that they cooperate with or oppose a good temper. When they cooperate, they diminish the moral evil; when they oppose, they may argue the depravity of temper to be greater, which is able to surmount such motives of interest.

But we must observe, that not only innocence is expected from all mortals, but they are presumed from their nature, in some measure, inclined to public good*; so that a bare absence of this desire is enough to make an agent be reputed evil: nor is a direct intention of public evil necessary to make an action evil; it is enough that it *Intention, foresight.*

* See Treatise IV. sect. 6.

flows from self-love, with a plain neglect of the good of others, or an insensibility of their misery, which we either actually foresee, or have a probable presumption of.

It is true indeed, that that public evil which I neither certainly foresee, nor have actual presumptions of, as the consequence of my action, does not make my present action criminal or odious; even although I might have foreseen this evil by a serious-examination of my own actions; because such actions do not at present, evidence either malice, or want of benevolence. But then it is also certain, that my prior negligence, in not examining the tendency of my actions, is a plain evidence of the want of that degree of good affections which is necessary to a virtuous character; and consequently the guilt properly lies in this neglect, rather than in an action which really flows from a good intention. Human laws however, which cannot examine the intentions, or secret knowledge of the agent, must judge in gross of the action itself; presupposing all that knowledge as actually attained, which we are obliged to attain.

In like manner, no good effect, which I did not actually foresee and intend, makes my action morally good; however human laws or governors, who cannot search into mens intentions, or know their secret designs, justly reward actions which tend to the public good, although the agent was engaged to those actions

only by selfish views; and consequently had no virtuous disposition influencing him to them.

The difference in degree of guilt between crimes of ignorance, when the ignorance is vincible, and faulty, as to the natural tendency of the action; and crimes of malice, or direct evil intention; consists in this, that the former, by a prior neglect, argues a want of the due degree of benevolence, or right affection; the latter evidences direct evil affections, which are vastly more odious.

XIII. FROM the former reasonings we may form almost a demonstrative conclusion, “that we have a sense of goodness *Morality distinct from* “and moral beauty in actions, distinct from *interest.*

“advantage;” for had we no other foundation of approbation of actions, but the advantage which might arise to us from them, if they were done toward ourselves we should make no account of the abilities of the agent, but would barely esteem them according to their moment. The abilities come in only to shew the degree of benevolence, which supposes benevolence necessarily amiable. Who was ever the better pleased with a barren rocky farm, or an inconvenient house, by being told that the poor farm gave as great increase as it could; or that the house accommodated its possessor as well as it could? And yet in our sentiments of actions, whose moment is very inconsiderable, it shall wonderfully increase the beauty to alledge, “That it

“ was all the poor agent could do for the public, or his
“ friend.”

Morality of XIV. THE moral beauty of characters
characters. arises from their actions, or sincere inten-
tions of the public good, according to
their power. We form our judgment of them accord-
ing to what appears to be their fixed disposition, and
not according to any particular fallies of unkind pas-
sions; although these abate the beauty of good cha-
racters, as the motions of the kind affections diminish
the deformity of the bad ones. What then properly
constitutes a virtuous character, is not some few acci-
dental motions of compassion, natural affection, or gra-
titude; but such a fixed humanity, or desire of the pu-
blic good of all, to whom our influence can extend, as
uniformly excites us to all acts of beneficence; and makes
us careful of informing ourselves right, concerning the
truest methods of serving their interests. Every mo-
tion indeed of the kind affections appears in some de-
gree amiable; but we denominate the character from
the prevailing principle.

Instinct may XV. SOME will not allow that vir-
be the spring tue can spring from passions, instincts, or
of virtue. affections of any kind. 'Tis true, kind
particular passions are but a lower kind
of goodness, even when they are not opposite to the
general good. Those calmer determinations of the will,
whether of greater or less extent, or sedate strong af-
fections, or desires of the good of others, are more ami-

able. These may be as much rooted in the frame of the soul, or there may be as natural a disposition to them as to particular passions. They tell us, that "Virtue should wholly spring from reason;" as if reason or knowledge of any true proposition could ever move to action where there is no end proposed, and no affection or desire toward that end*. For this see Treatise IV. sect. i. and ii.

The ultimate end, according to many of our moralists, is to each one his own happiness; and yet this he seeks by instinct. Now may not another instinct toward the public, or the good of others, be as proper a principle of virtue, as the instinct toward private happiness? This is certain, that whereas we behold the selfish actions of others, with indifference at best, we see something amiable in every action which flows from

* These gentlemen should either remember the common doctrine of the schools, or else confute it better; that the *προαίρεσις* which is necessary in virtuous actions is *ὁρεξις βουλευτική*: and that virtue needs not only the *λογὸν ἀληθῆ*, but the *ὁρεξιν ὀρθήν*. These very authors who deny any affections or motions of the will to be the proper springs of sublime virtue, yet, inconsistently with themselves, must allow in men of sublime virtue, and even in the Deity too, a settled disposition of will, or a constant determination, or desire to act in conformity to reason, or a fixed affection toward a certain manner of conduct. Now an ill-natured adversary would call this an instinct, an essential or natural disposition of will, an affectionate determination toward a very sublime object presented by the understanding. See Aristotle's *Magn. Moral. lib. i. c. 18, 35.* and *lib. ii. c. 7 and 8.* and in many other places.

kind affections or passions toward others; if they be conducted by prudence, so as any way to attain their end, consistently with the general good. If it be said, "That actions from instinct, are not the effect of prudence and choice;" this objection holds full as strongly against the actions which flow from self-love; since the use of our reason is as requisite to find the proper means of promoting public good, as private good. And as it must be an instinct, or a determination previous to reason, which makes us pursue private good, as well as public good, as our end; there is the same occasion for prudence and choice, in the election of proper means for promoting of either. I see no harm in supposing, "that men are naturally disposed to virtue, and not left merely indifferent, until some prospect of interest allures them to it." Surely, the supposition of a benevolent universal instinct, would recommend human nature, and its Author, more to the love of a good man, and leave room enough for the exercise of our reason, in contriving and settling rights, laws, constitutions; in inventing arts, and practising them so as to gratify, in the most effectual manner, that generous inclination. And if we must bring in self-love to make virtue rational, a little reflection will discover, as shall appear hereafter, that this benevolence is our greatest happiness; and thence we may resolve to cultivate, as much as possible, this sweet disposition, and to despise every opposite interest. Not that we can be truly virtuous,

if we intend only to obtain the pleasure which arises from beneficence, without the love of others: nay, this very pleasure is founded on our being conscious of disinterested love to others, as the spring of our actions. But self-interest may be our motive in studying to raise these kind affections, and to continue in this agreeable state; though it cannot be the sole, or principal motive of any action, which to our moral sense appears virtuous*.

* 'Tis thus we must understand many places of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and others of the antients, when they speak of "a natural instinct or disposition in each being, toward his own preservation and highest perfection, as the spring of virtue." 'Tis acknowledged by all, that we have such an instinct, which must operate very instinctively at first, till we come to consider our constitution, and our several powers. When we do so, we find, according to them, the natural principles of virtue, or the *φυσικαὶ ἀρεταί*, implanted in us: they appear to us the noblest parts of our nature; such are our desires of knowledge, our relish for beauty, especially of the moral kind, our sociable affections. These upon reflection we find to be natural parts of our constitution, and we desire to bring them to perfection from the first-mentioned general instinct. We must not thence conclude, that all our affections spring from self-love, or are ultimately pursuing private good. Disinterested affections are presupposed as natural parts of our constitution, and found in it upon reflection, not raised by an act of choice for some private good, nor ultimately pursuing it. (See Cicero de Finib. lib. iii. and lib. v.) This would be manifestly contrary to the most express words of these great men on friendship, patriotism, and other subjects. See Aristotle in the Magn. Moral. and Nicom. on friendship; and Cicero de Finib. lib. ii. and lib. v.

*Heroism in
all stations.*

FROM the preceding reasonings we shall only draw this one inference, which seems the most joyful imaginable, even to the lowest rank of mankind, viz. "That no external circumstances of fortune, no involuntary disadvantages, can exclude any mortal from the most heroic virtue." For how small soever the moment of public good be, which any one can accomplish, yet if his abilities are proportionably small, the virtue may be as great as any whatsoever. Thus, not only the prince, the statesman, the general, are capable of true heroism, though these are the chief characters, whose fame is diffused through various nations and ages: but when we find in an honest trader, the kind friend, the faithful prudent adviser, the charitable and hospitable neighbour, the tender husband, and affectionate parent, the sedate yet chearful companion, the generous assistant of merit, the cautious allayer of contention and debate, the promoter of love and good understanding among acquaintances; if we consider, that these were all the good offices which his station in the world gave him an opportunity of performing to mankind, we must judge this character really as amiable, as those, whose external splendor dazzles an injudicious world into an opinion, "that they are the only heroes in virtue."

S E C T. IV.

All mankind agree in this general Foundation of their approbation of moral Actions. The grounds of the different Opinions about Morals.

I. **T**O shew how far mankind agree *This moral* in that which we have made the *sense* universal foundation of this moral sense, *versal*. viz. *benevolence*, we have observed already*, that when we are asked the reason of our approbation of any action, we universally alledge its usefulness to the public, and not to the actor himself. If we are vindicating a censured action, and maintaining it lawful, we generally make this one article of our defence, "That it injured no body, or did more good than harm." On the other hand, when we blame any piece of conduct, we shew it to be prejudicial to others, besides the actor; or to evidence at least a neglect of their interest, when it was in our power to serve them; or when gratitude, natural affection, or some other disinterested tie should have raised in us a study of their interest. If we sometimes blame foolish conduct in others, without any reflection upon its tendency to public evil, it is generally occasioned by our benevolence, which makes us concerned for the evils befalling others†.

* See above, sect. iii. art. 3. par. 3.

† Beside that moral approbation or commendation, we have also an immediate natural relish for certain powers and abilities, and the regular exercise of them; and a dislike and con-

We all know how great an extenuation of crimes it is, to alledge, "That the poor man does harm to no body but himself;" and how often this turns hatred into pity. And yet we shall find, that the greatest part of the actions which are immediately prejudicial to ourselves, and are often looked upon as innocent toward others, do really tend to the public detriment, by making us incapable of performing the good offices we could otherwise have done, and perhaps would have been inclined to do. This is the case of intemperance, and extravagant luxury.

*Benevolence the
sole ground of
approbation.*

II. AND farther, we may observe, that no action of any other person was ever approved by us, but upon some apprehension, well or ill grounded, of some really good moral quality. If we observe the sentiments of men concerning actions, we shall find, that it is always some really amiable and benevolent appearance which engages their approbation. We may perhaps commit mistakes, in judging that actions tend to the public good, which do not; or be so inadvertent, that while our attention is fixed on some partial good effects, we may quite overlook many evil consequences which counterbalance the good. Our reason may be very deficient in its office, by giving us par-

tempt of a person who wants them, or has not cultivated them; when we don't think of any subserviency to a public good. But this is rather perceiving a vigorous or a mean character, than a virtuous or vitious one.

tial representations of the tendency of actions ; but 'tis still some apparent species of benevolence which commands our approbation. And this sense, like our other senses, though counteracted by stronger motives of external advantage, ceases not to operate, but makes us uneasy and dissatisfied with ourselves ; even as the sense of tasting makes us loath and dislike the nauseous potion, which we may force ourselves, from interest, to swallow.

It is therefore to no purpose to alledge here, " That many actions are really done *False appro-*
" and approved, which tend to the uni- *bations.*

" versal detriment." For the same way, actions are often performed, and in the mean time approved, which tend to the hurt of the actor. But as we do not, from the latter, infer the actor to be void of self-love, or a sense of interest ; no more should we infer from the former, that such men are void of a sense of morals, or a desire of public good. The matter is plainly this : Men are often mistaken in the tendency of actions either to public or private good : nay, sometimes violent passions, while they last, will make them approve very bad actions by their moral sense, and conceive very pernicious ones to the agent, to be advantageous : but this proves only, " That sometimes there may be some
" more violent motive to action, than a sense of moral
" good ; or that men by passion may become blind e-
" ven to their own interest."

But to prove that men are void of a moral sense, we should find some instances of cruel, malicious actions,

done without any motive of interest, real or apparent; and approved without any opinion of tendency to public good, or flowing from good-will: we must find a country where murder in cold blood, tortures, and every thing malicious, without any advantage, is, if not approved, at least looked upon with indifference, and raises no aversion toward the actors in the unconcerned spectators: we must find men with whom the treacherous, ungrateful, cruel, are in the same account with the generous, friendly, faithful, and humane; and who approve the latter, no more than the former, in all cases where they are not affected by the influence of these dispositions, or when the natural good or evil befalls other persons. And it may be questioned, whether the universe, though large enough, and stored with no inconsiderable variety of characters, will yield us any instance, not only of a nation, but even of a club, or a single person, who will think all actions indifferent, but those which regard his own concerns.

Diversity of manners accounted for. III. FROM what has been said, we may easily account for the vast diversity of moral principles, in various nations and ages; and the grounds of this diversity are principally these:

From various notions of happiness. 1st. Different opinions of happiness, or natural good, and of the most effectual means to advance it. Thus in one country, where there prevails a courageous disposition, where liberty is counted a great

good, and war an inconsiderable evil, all insurrections in defence of privileges will have the appearance of moral good to our sense, because of their appearing benevolent; and yet the same sense of moral good in benevolence, shall in another country, where the spirits of men are more abject and timorous, where civil war appears the greatest natural evil, and liberty no great purchase, make the same actions appear odious. So in Sparta, where through contempt of wealth the security of possessions was not much regarded, but the thing chiefly desired, as naturally good to the state, was to abound in a hardy shifting youth; theft, if dexterously performed, was so little odious, that it received the countenance of a law to give it impunity.

But in these, and all other instances of the like nature, the approbation is founded on benevolence, because of some real, or apparent tendency to the public good. For we are not to imagine, that this sense should give us, without observation, ideas of complex actions, or of their natural tendencies to good or evil: it only determines us to approve benevolence, whenever it appears in any action, and to hate the contrary. So our sense of beauty does not, without reflection, instruction or observation, give us ideas of the regular solids, temples, cirques, and theatres; but determines us to approve and delight in uniformity amidst variety, where-ever we observe it. Let us read the preambles of any laws we count unjust, or the vindications of any disputed practice by the moralists, and we shall find,

no doubt, that men are often mistaken in computing the excess of the natural good or evil consequences of certain actions ; but the ground on which any action is approved, is still some tendency to the greater natural good of others, apprehended by those who approve it.

Travellers accounts of barbarous customs.

The same reason may remove also the objections against the universality of this sense, from some stories of travellers, concerning strange cruelties practised toward the aged, or children, in certain countries. If such actions be done in such angry passions, they only prove, that other motives, or springs of action, may overpower benevolence in its strongest ties : and if they really be universally allowed, looked upon as innocent, and vindicated ; it is certainly under some appearance of benevolence ; such as to secure them from insults of enemies, to avoid the infirmities of age, which perhaps appear greater evils than death, or to free the vigorous and useful citizens from the charge of maintaining them, or the troubles of attendance upon them. A love of pleasure and ease, may in the immediate agents be stronger in some instances, than gratitude toward parents, or natural affection to children. But that such nations are continued, notwithstanding all the toil in educating their young, is still a sufficient proof of natural affection : for I fancy we are not to imagine any nice laws in such places, compelling parents to a proper education of some certain number of

their offspring. We know very well that an appearance of public good was the ground of laws equally barbarous, enacted by Lycurgus and Solon, of killing the deformed, or weak, to prevent a burdensome croud of useless citizens.

A late ingenious author * has justly observed the absurdity of the monstrous taste, which has possessed both the readers and writers of travels. They are sparing enough in accounts of the natural affections, the families, associations, friendships, clans, of the Indians; and as transiently do they mention their abhorrence of treachery among themselves; their proneness to mutual aid, and to the defence of their several states; their contempt of death in defence of their country, or upon points of honour. "These are but common stories.—No need to travel to the Indies for what we see in Europe every day." The entertainment therefore in these ingenious studies consists chiefly in exciting horror, and making men stare. The ordinary employment of the bulk of the Indians in support of their wives and offspring, or relations, has nothing of the prodigious: but a human sacrifice, a feast upon enemies carcases, can raise an horror and admiration of the wondrous barbarity of Indians, in nations no strangers to the massacre at Paris, the Irish rebellion, or the journals of the inquisition. These they behold with religious veneration; but the Indian sacrifices,

* Lord Shaftesbury, vol. i. p. 346, 7, 8, 9, &c.

flowing from a like perversion of humanity by superstition, raise the highest abhorrence and amazement. What is most surprising in these studies, is the wondrous credulity of some gentlemen of great pretensions in other matters to caution of assent, for these marvellous memoirs of monks, friars, sea-captains, pirates; and for the historys, annals, chronologies, received by oral tradition, or hieroglyphics.

Use of reason in morals. Men have reason given them, to judge of the tendencies of their actions, that they may not stupidly follow the first appearance of public good; but it is still some appearance of good which they pursue. And it is strange, that reason is universally allowed to men, notwithstanding all the stupid ridiculous opinions received in many places; and yet absurd practices, founded upon those very opinions, shall seem an argument against any moral sense, although the bad conduct is not owing to any irregularity in the moral sense, but to a wrong judgment or opinion. If putting the aged to death, with all its consequences, really tends to the public good, and the lesser misery of the aged, it is, no doubt, justifiable; nay, perhaps the aged choose it, in hopes of a future state. If a deformed or weak race could never, by ingenuity and art, make themselves useful to mankind, but should grow an absolutely unsupportable burden, so as to involve a whole state in misery, it is just to put them to death. This all allow to be just, in the case of an over-loaded boat in a storm. And as for

killing of their children, when parents are sufficiently stocked, it is perhaps practised, and allowed from self-love ; but I can scarce think it passes for a good action any-where. If wood or stone, or metal be deities, have government, and power, and have been the authors of benefits to us ; it is morally amiable to praise and worship them. Or if the true Deity be pleased with worship before statues, or any other symbol of some more immediate presence or influence ; image-worship is virtuous. If he delights in sacrifices, penances, ceremonies, cringings ; they are all laudable. Our sense of virtue generally leads us exactly enough according to our opinions ; and therefore the absurd practices which prevail in the world, are much better arguments that men have no reason, than that they have no moral sense of beauty in actions.

THE next ground of diversity in sentiments, is the diversity of systems, to which men, from foolish opinions, confine their benevolence. We intimated above *, that it is regular and beautiful, to have stronger benevolence toward the morally good parts of mankind, who are useful to the whole, than toward the useless or pernicious. Now, if men receive a low or base opinion of any body, or sect of men ; if they imagine them bent upon the destruction of the more valuable parts, or but useless burdens of the earth ; be-

*Narrow systems
pervert the moral
sense.*

* See sect. iii. art. 10. par. 1.

nevolence itself will lead them to neglect the interests of such, and to suppress them. This is the reason why, among nations who have high notions of virtue, every action toward an enemy may pass for just; why Romans and Greeks could approve of making those they called barbarians, slaves.

Sects pernicious to virtue. A late ingenious author * justly observes, " That the various sects,

" parties, factions, cabals of mankind
 " in larger societies, are all influenced by a public spirit: that some generous notions of public good, some
 " strong friendly dispositions, raise them at first, and
 " excite men of the same faction or cabal to the most
 " disinterested mutual succour and aid: that all the
 " contentions of the different factions, and even the
 " fiercest wars against each other, are influenced by a
 " sociable public spirit in a limited system." But certain it is, that men are little obliged to those, who often artfully raise and foment this party spirit; or cantonize them into several sects for the defence of very trifling causes. Associations for innocent commerce, or manufactures; cabals for defence of liberty, against a tyrant; or even lower clubs for pleasantries, or improvement by conversation, are very amiable and good. But when mens heads are filled with some trifling opinions; when designing men raise in their minds some unaccountable notion of sanctity and religion, in te-

* Lord Shaftesbury's Essay on Wit and Humour, part iii. sect. ii. vol. 1. p. 110.

nets or practices, which neither increase our love to God, or our own species; when the several factions are taught to look upon each other as odious, contemptible, profane, because of their different tenets or opinions; even when these tenets, whether true or false, are perhaps perfectly useless to the public good; when the keenest passions are raised about such trifles, and men begin to hate each other for what, of itself, has no evil in it; and to love the zealots of their own sect for what is no way valuable; nay, even for their fury, rage, and malice against opposite sects; (which is what all parties commonly call zeal) 'tis then no wonder, if our moral sense be much impaired, and our natural notions of good and evil almost lost, when our admiration, and love or contempt, and hatred, are thus perverted from their natural objects.

If any mortals are so happy as never to have heard of the party-tenets of most of our sects; or, if they have heard of them, have either never espoused any sect, or all equally; they bid fairest for a truly natural and good disposition, because their tempers have never been soured about vain trifles; nor have they contracted any sullenness or rancour against any part of their own kind. If any opinions deserve to be contended for, they are those which give us lovely ideas of the Deity, and of our fellow-creatures: if any opinions deserve opposition, they are such as raise scruples in our minds about the goodness of Providence, or represent our fellow-creatures as base and selfish, by in-

stiling into us some ill-natured, cunning, shrewd insinuations, "That our most generous actions proceed wholly from selfish views." This wise philosophy of some moderns, after Epicurus, must be fruitful of nothing but discontent, suspicion, and jealousy; a state infinitely worse than any little transitory injuries, to which we might be exposed by a good-natured credulity. But thanks be to the kind Author of our nature, that in spite of such opinions, our nature itself leads us into friendship, trust, and mutual confidence.

Were we freely conversant with robbers, who shew a moral sense in the equal or proportionable division of their prey, and in faith to each other, we should find they have their own sublime moral ideas of their party, as generous, courageous, trusty, nay honest too; and that those we call honest and industrious, are imagined by them to be mean-spirited, selfish, churlish, or luxurious; on whom that wealth is ill bestowed, which therefore they would apply to better uses, to maintain gallanter men, who have a right to a living as well as their neighbours, who are their professed enemies. Nay, if we observe the discourse of our professed debauchees, our most dissolute rakes, we shall find their vices cloathed, in their imaginations, with some amiable dress of liberty, generosity, just resentment against the contrivers of artful rules to enslave men, and rob them of their pleasures.

Perhaps never any men pursued vice long with peace of mind, without some such deluding imagination of

moral good*, while they may be still inadvertent to the barbarous and inhuman consequences of their actions. The idea of an ill-natured villain is too frightful ever to become familiar to any mortal. Hence we shall find, that the basest actions are dressed in some tolerable mask. What others call avarice, appears to the agent a prudent care of a family, or friends; fraud, artful conduct; malice and revenge, a just sense of honour, and a vindication of our right in possessions, or fame; fire and sword, and desolation, among enemies, a just thorow defence of our country; persecution, a zeal for the truth, and for the eternal happiness of men, which heretics oppose. In all these instances, men generally act from a sense of virtue upon false opinions, and mistaken benevolence; upon wrong or partial views of public good, and the means to promote it; or upon very narrow systems formed by like foolish opinions. It is not a delight in the misery of others, or malice, which occasions the horrid crimes which fill our histories; but generally an injudicious, unreasonable enthusiasm for some kind of limited virtue.

“ Infani sapiens nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,

“ Ultra, quam satis est, *virtutem* si petat ipsam †.

* See below, sect. vi. art. 2. par. 2.

† Hor. Ep. 6. lib. 1. ver. 25.

*False opinions
of the divine
laws.*

V. THE last ground of diversity which occurs, are the false opinions of the will or laws of the Deity. To obey these we are determined from gratitude, and a sense of right imagined in the Deity, to dispose at pleasure the fortunes of his creatures. This is so abundantly known to have produced follies, superstitions, murders, devastations of kingdoms, from a sense of virtue and duty, that it is needless to mention particular instances. Only we may observe, "That all those follies, or barbarities, rather confirm than destroy the opinion of a moral sense;" since the Deity is believed to have a right to dispose of his creatures; and gratitude to him, if he be conceived good, must move us to obedience to his will: if he be not conceived good, self-love may overcome our moral sense of the action which we undertake to avoid his fury.

As for the vices which commonly proceed from love of pleasure, or any violent passion, since generally the agent is soon sensible of their evil, and that sometimes amidst the heat of the action, they only prove, "That this moral sense and benevolence may be overcome by the more importunate sollicitations of other desires."

*Objection
from in-
cest.*

VI. BEFORE we leave this subject, it is necessary to remove one of the strongest objections against what has been said so often, viz. "That this sense is natural, and independent on custom and education." The objection

is this, " That we shall find some actions always attended with the strongest abhorrence, even at first view, in some whole nations, in which there appears nothing contrary to benevolence ; and that the same actions shall in another nation be counted innocent, or honourable. Thus incest, among Christians, is abhorred at first appearance as much as murder ; even by those who do not know or reflect upon any necessary tendency of it to the detriment of mankind. Now we generally allow, that what is from nature in one nation, would be so in all. This abhorrence therefore cannot be from nature, since in Greece, the marrying half-sisters was counted honourable ; and among the Persian Magi, the marrying of mothers. Say they then, may not all our approbation or dislike of actions arise the same way from custom and education ?"

The answer to this may be easily found from what is already said. Had we no moral sense natural to us, we should only look upon incest as hurtful to ourselves, and shun it, and never disapprove other incestuous persons, more than we do a broken merchant ; so that still this abhorrence supposes a sense of moral good. And farther, it is true, that many who abhor incest do not know, or reflect upon the natural tendency of some sorts of incest to the public detriment : but wherever it is hated, it is apprehended as offensive to the Deity, and that it exposes the person concerned to his just vengeance. Now it is universally acknowledged to

be the grossest ingratitude and baseness, in any creature, to counteract the will of the Deity, to whom it is under such obligations. This then is plainly a moral evil quality apprehended in incest, and reducible to the general foundation of malice, or rather want of benevolence. Nay farther, where this opinion, "That incest is offensive to the Deity," prevails, incest must have another direct contrariety to benevolence; since we must apprehend the incestuous, as exposing an associate, who should be dear to him by the ties of nature, to the lowest state of misery and baseness, infamy and punishment. But in those countries where no such opinion prevails of the Deity's abhorring or prohibiting incest; if no obvious natural evils attend it, it may be looked upon as innocent. And farther, as men who have the sense of tasting, may, by company and education, have prejudices against meats they never tasted, as unsavory; so may men who have a moral sense, acquire an opinion by implicit faith, of the moral evil of actions, although they do not themselves discern in them any tendency to natural evil; imagining that others do: or, by education, they may have some ideas associated, which raise an abhorrence without reason. But without a moral sense, we could receive no prejudice against actions, under any other view than as naturally disadvantageous to ourselves.

*Moral sense not
from education.*

VII. THE universality of this moral sense, and that is antecedent to instruction, may appear from observ-

ing the sentiments of children, upon hearing the stories with which they are commonly entertained as soon as they understand language. They always passionately interest themselves on that side where kindness and humanity are found ; and detest the cruel, the covetous, the selfish, or the treacherous. How strongly do we see their passions of joy, sorrow, love, and indignation, moved by these moral representations, even though there have been no pains taken to give them ideas of a Deity, of laws, of a future state, or of the more intricate tendency of the universal good to that of each individual !

S E C T. V.

A farther confirmation, that we have practical dispositions to Virtue implanted in our Nature ; with a farther explication of our Benevolent Instincts of various kinds, with the additional motive of Interest, viz. Honour, Shame and Pity.

Degrees of benevolence. I. **W**E have already endeavoured to prove, “ That there is an

“ universal determination to benevolence in mankind, even toward the most distant parts of the species :” but we are not to imagine, that all benevolent affections are of one kind, or alike strong. There are nearer and stronger kinds of benevolence, when the objects stand in some nearer relations to ourselves, which have obtained distinct names ; such as natural affection, gratitude, esteem.

Natural affection. One species of natural affection, viz. that in parents towards their children, has been considered already * ; we shall only observe farther, that there is the same kind of affection among collateral relations, though in a weaker degree ; which is universally observable, where no opposition of interest produces contrary actions, or counterbalances the power of this natural affection.

* See above, sect. ii. art. 9. par. 2, 3.

We may also observe, that as to the affection of parents, it cannot be entirely founded on merit and acquaintance; not only because it is antecedent to all acquaintance, which might occasion esteem; but because it operates where acquaintance would produce hatred, even toward children apprehended to be vitious. And this affection is farther confirmed to be from nature, because it is always observed to descend, and not ascend from children to parents mutually. Nature, who seems sometimes frugal in her operations, has strongly determined parents to the care of their children, because they universally stand in absolute need of support from them; but has left it to reflection, and a sense of gratitude, to produce returns of love in children, toward such tender kind benefactors, who very seldom stand in such absolute need of support from their posterity, as their children did from them. Now, did acquaintance or merit produce natural affection, we surely should find it strongest in children, on whom all the obligations are laid by a thousand good offices; which yet is quite contrary to observation. Nay, this principle seems not confined to mankind, but extends to other animals, where yet we scarcely ever suppose any ideas of merit; and is observed to continue in them no longer than the necessities of their young require. Nor could it be of any service to the young that it should, since when they are grown up, they can receive little benefit from the love of their dams. But as it is otherwise with rational

*Not founded
on merit, or
acquaintance.*

agents, so their affections are of longer continuance, even during their whole lives.

Gratitude. II. But nothing will give us a juster idea of the wise order in which human nature is formed for universal love, and mutual good offices, than considering that strong attraction of benevolence, which we call gratitude. Every one knows that beneficence toward ourselves makes a much deeper impression upon us, and raises gratitude, or a stronger love toward the benefactor, than equal beneficence toward a third person *. Now because of the great numbers of mankind, their distant habitations, and the incapacity of any one to be remarkably useful to great multitudes; that our benevolence might not be quite distracted with a multiplicity of objects, whose equal virtues would equally recommend them to our regard; or become useless, by being equally extended to multitudes, whose interests we could not understand, nor be capable of promoting, having no intercourse of offices with them; Nature has so well ordered it, that as our attention is more raised by those good offices which are done to ourselves or our friends, so they cause a stronger sense of approbation in us, and produce a stronger benevolence toward the authors of them. This we call gratitude. And thus a foundation is laid for joyful associations in all kinds of business, and virtuous friendships.

* See above, sect. ii. art. 6. par. 3.

By this constitution also the benefactor is more encouraged in his beneficence, and better secured of an increase of happiness by grateful returns †, than if his virtue were only to be honoured by the colder general sentiments of persons unconcerned, who could not know his necessities, nor how to be profitable to him; especially, when they would all be equally determined to love innumerable multitudes, whose equal virtues would have the same pretensions to their love.

The universal benevolence toward all men, we may compare to that principle of gravitation, which perhaps extends to all bodies in the universe; but increases as the distance is diminished, and is strongest when bodies come to touch each other. Now this increase upon nearer approach, is as necessary as that there should be any attraction at all. For a general attraction, equal in all distances, would, by the contrariety of such multitudes of equal forces, put an end to all regularity of motion, and perhaps stop it altogether. Beside this general attraction, the learned in these subjects shew us a great many other attractions among several sorts of bodies, answering to some particular sorts of passions, from some special causes. And that attraction or force by which the parts of each body cohere, may represent the self-love of each individual.

These different sorts of love to persons according to their nearer approaches to ourselves by their benefits, is observable in the high degree of love,

† See above, sect. iii. art. 2. par. 2.

which heroes and lawgivers universally obtain in their own countries, above what they find abroad, even among those who are not insensible of their virtues; and in all the strong ties of friendship, acquaintance, neighbourhood, partnership; which are exceedingly necessary to the order and happiness of human society.

Love of honour. III. FROM considering that natural gratitude, and love toward our benefactors, which was already shewn to be disinterested*; we are easily led to consider another determination of our minds, equally natural with the former, which is to desire and delight in the good opinion and love of others, even when we expect no other advantage from them, except what flows from this constitution, whereby Honour is made an immediate good. This desire of honour I would call Ambition, had not custom joined some evil ideas to that word, making it denote such a violent desire of honour, and of power also, as will make us stop at no base means to obtain them. On the other hand, we are by nature subjected to a grievous sensation of misery, from the unfavourable opinions of others concerning us, even when we dread no other evil from them. This we call Shame; which in the same manner is constituted an immediate evil, as we said honour was an immediate good.

* See above, sect. ii. art. 6.

Now, were there no moral sense, or had we no other idea of actions but as advantageous or hurtful, I see no reason why we should be delighted with honour, or subjected to the uneasiness of shame; or how it could ever happen, that a man, who is secure from punishment for any action, should ever be uneasy at its being known to all the world. The world may have an opinion of him as pernicious to his neighbours; but what subjects his ease to this opinion of the world? Why, perhaps, he shall not be so much trusted henceforward in business, and so suffer loss. If this be the only reason of shame, and it has no immediate evil or pain in it, distinct from fear of loss, then, where-ever we expose ourselves to loss, we should be ashamed, and endeavour to conceal the action: and yet it is quite otherwise.

A merchant, for instance, lest it should impair his credit, conceals a shipwreck, or a very bad market, which he has sent his goods to. But is this the same with the passion of shame? Has he that anguish, that dejection of mind, and self-condemnation, which one shall have whose treachery is detected? Nay, how will men sometimes glory in their losses, when in a cause imagined morally good, though they really weaken their credit in the merchant's sense; that is, the opinion of their wealth, or fitness for business? Was any man ever ashamed of impoverishing himself to serve his country, or his friend?

IV. THE opinions of our country
The foundation of morals not the opinions of our country. are by some made the first standard of virtue. They alledge, "That by comparing actions to them, we first distinguish between moral good and evil: and then, say they, ambition, or the love of honour, is our chief motive." But what is honour? It is not the being universally known, no matter how. A covetous man is not honoured by being universally known as covetous; nor a weak, selfish, or luxurious man, when he is known to be so: much less can a treacherous, cruel or ungrateful man, be said to be honoured for his being known as such. A posture-master, a fire-eater, or practiser of leger-de-main, is not honoured for these public shews, unless we consider him as a person capable of giving the pleasures of admiration and surprize to multitudes. Honour then is the opinion of others concerning our morally good actions, or abilities presumed to be applied that way; for abilities constantly applied to other purposes, procure the greatest infamy. Now it is certain, that ambition, or love of honour, is really selfish; but then this determination to love honour, presupposes a sense of moral virtue, both in the persons who confer the honour, and in him who pursues it.

And let it be observed, that if we knew an agent had no other motive of action than ambition, we should apprehend no virtue even in his most useful actions, since they flow'd not from any love to others, or desire

to their happiness. When honour is thus constituted by nature pleasant to us, it may be an additional motive to virtue, as, we said above *, the pleasure arising from reflection on our benevolence was : but the person whom we imagine perfectly virtuous, acts immediately from the love of others ; however these refined interests may be joint motives to him to set about such a course of actions, or to cultivate every kind inclination, and to despise every contrary interest, as giving a smaller happiness than reflection on his own virtue, and consciousness of the esteem of others.

Shame is in the same manner constituted an immediate evil, and influences us the same way to abstain from moral evil : not that any action or omission would appear virtuous, where the sole motive was fear of shame.

V. But to inquire farther, how far the opinions of our company can raise a sense of moral good or evil : if any opinion be universal in any country, men of little reflection will probably embrace it. If an action be believed to be advantageous to the agent, we may be led to believe so too, and then self-love may make us undertake it ; or may, the same way, make us shun an action reputed pernicious to the agent. If an action pass for advantageous to the public, we may believe so too ; and what next ? If we have no disinterested be-

*Opinions flow
from the mo-
ral sense.*

* See sect. iii. art. 15. par. 2.

nevolence, what shall move us to undertake it? "Why, we love honour; and to obtain this pleasure, we will undertake the action from self-interest." Now, is honour only the opinion of our country, that an action is advantageous to the public? No: we see no honour paid to the useful treachery of an enemy, whom we have bribed to our side, to casual undesigned services, or to the most useful effects of compulsion on cowards; and yet we see honour paid to unsuccessful attempts to serve the public from sincere love to it. Honour then presupposes a sense of something amiable besides advantage, viz. a sense of excellence in a public spirit; and therefore the first sense of moral good must be antecedent to honour; for honour is founded upon it*. The company we keep may lead us, without examining, to believe that certain actions tend to the public good; but that our company honours such actions, and loves the agent, must flow from a sense of some excellence in this love of the public, and serving its interests.

"We therefore, say they again, pretend to love the public, although we only desire the pleasure of honour; and we will applaud all who seem to act in that manner, either that we may reap advantage from their actions, or that others may believe we really love the public." But shall any man ever

* This should be considered by those who talk much of praise, high opinion, or value, esteem, glory, as things much desired; while yet they allow no moral sense.

be heartily approved and admired, when we know that self-love is the only spring of his actions? No: that is impossible. Or, shall we ever really admire men who appear to love the public, without a moral sense? No; we should distrust all pretenders to such a temper, and hate them as hypocrites, and our rivals in fame. Now this is all which could be effected by the opinions of our country, even supposing they had a moral sense, provided we had none ourselves: they never could make us admire virtue, or virtuous characters in others: but could only give us opinions of advantage or disadvantage in actions, according as they tended to procure to us the pleasures of honour, or the pain of shame.

But if we suppose that men have, by nature, a moral sense of goodness in actions; and that they are capable of disinterested love; all is easy. The opinions of our company may make us rashly conclude, that certain actions tend to the universal detriment, and are morally evil, when perhaps they are not so; and then our sense may determine us to have an aversion to them, and their authors; or we may, the same way, be led into implicit prejudices in favour of actions as good; and then our desire of honour may co-operate with benevolence, to move us to such actions. But, had we no sense of moral qualities in actions, nor any conceptions of them, except as advantageous or hurtful, we never could have honoured or loved agents for public love, or had any regard to their actions, farther

than they affected ourselves in particular. We might have formed the metaphysical idea of public good, but we had never desired it, farther than it tended to our own private interest, without a principle of benevolence; nor admired and loved those who are studious of it, without a moral sense. So far is virtue from being (in the language of a late * author) the offspring of flattery, begot upon pride; that pride, in the bad meaning of that word, is the spurious brood of ignorance by our moral sense, and flattery only an engine, which the cunning may use to turn this moral sense in others, to the purposes of self-love in the flatterer.

Moral sense, not from love of honour. VI. To explain what has been said of the power of honour: suppose a state or prince, observing the money which is drawn out of England by Italian musicians, should decree honours, statues, titles, for great musicians: this would certainly excite all who had hopes of success, to the study of music; and all men would look upon the good performers as useful subjects, as well as very entertaining. But would this give all men a good ear, or make them delight in harmony? Or could it ever make us really love a musician, who studied nothing but his own gain, in the same manner we do a patriot, or a generous friend? I doubt, not. And yet friendship, without the assistance of statues,

* Author of the Fable of the Bees, page 37, third edition.

or honours, can make persons appear exceedingly amiable.

Let us take another instance: Suppose statues and triumphal arches were decreed, as well as a large sum of money, to the discoverer of the longitude, or any other useful invention in mathematics: this would raise an universal desire of such knowledge from self-love; but would men therefore love a mathematician, as they do a virtuous man? Would a mathematician love every person who had attained perfection in that knowledge, where-ever he observed it, altho' he knew that it was not accompanied with any love to mankind, or study of their good, but with ill-nature, pride, covetousness? In short, let us honour other qualities by external shew as much as we please; if we do not discern a benevolent intention in the application, or presume upon it, we may look upon these qualities as useful, enriching, or otherwise advantageous to any one who is possess'd of them; but they shall never meet with those endearing sentiments of esteem and love, which our nature determines us to appropriate to benevolence or virtue.

Love of honour, and aversion to shame, may often move us to do actions for which others profess to honour us, even tho' we see no good in them ourselves: and compliance with the inclinations of others, as it evidences humanity, may procure some love to the agent, from spectators who see no moral good in the action itself. But without some sense of good in the

actions, men shall never be fond of such actions in solitude, nor ever love any one for perfection in them, or for practising them in solitude; and much less shall they be dissatisfied with themselves, when they act otherwise in solitude. Now this is the case with us, as to virtue; and therefore we must have, by nature, a moral sense of it antecedent to honour.

This will shew us with what judgment a late * author compares the original of our ideas of virtue, and approbation of it, to the manner of regulating the behaviour of awkward children by commendation. It shall appear hereafter †, that our approbation of some gestures, and what we call decency in motion, depends upon some moral ideas in people of advanced years. But before children come to observe this relation, it is only good nature, an inclination to please, and love of praise, which makes them endeavour to behave as they are desired; and not any perception of excellence in this behaviour. Hence they are not solicitous about gestures when alone, unless with a view to please when they return to company; nor do they ever love or approve others for any perfection of this kind, but rather envy or hate them; till they either discern the connexion between gestures and moral qualities; or reflect on the good nature, which is evidenced by such a compliance with the desire of the company.

* See the Fable of the Bees, page 38. 3d Ed.

† See sect. vi. art. 4.

VII. THE considering honour in the manner above explained may shew us *False honour.* the reason, why men are often ashamed for things which are not vitious, and honoured for what is not virtuous. For, if any action only appears vitious to any persons or company, although it be not so, they will have a bad idea of the agent; and then he may be ashamed, or suffer uneasiness, in being thought morally evil. The same way, those who look upon an action as morally good, will honour the agent; and he may be pleased with the honour, although he does not himself perceive any moral good in what has procured it.

Again, we shall be ashamed of every *Moral incapacity, matter of shame.* evidence of moral incapacity, or want of ability; and with good ground, when this want is occasioned by our own negligence. Nay farther, if any circumstance be looked upon as indecent in any country, offensive to others, or deformed; we shall, out of our desire of the good opinions of others, be ashamed to be found in such circumstances, even when we are sensible that this indecency or offence is not founded on nature, but is merely the effect of custom. Thus being observed in those functions of nature which are counted indecent and offensive, will make us uneasy, although we are sensible that they really do not argue any vice or weakness. But on the contrary, since moral abilities of any

kind, upon the general presumption of a good application, and of having been acquired by virtue, procure the esteem of others, we shall value ourselves upon them, or grow proud of them, and be ashamed of any discovery of our want of such abilities. This is the reason that wealth and power, the great engines of virtue, when presumed to be intended for benevolent purposes, either toward our friends or our country, procure honour from others, and are apt to beget pride in the possessor; which, as it is a general passion, which may be either good or evil, according as it is grounded, we may describe to be the joy which arises from the real or imagined possession of honour, or claim to it. The same are the effects of knowledge, sagacity, strength; and hence it is that men are apt to boast of them.

But, whenever it appears that men have only their private advantage in view, in the application of these abilities, or natural advantages, the honour ceases, and we study to conceal them, or at least are not fond of displaying them; and much more, when there is any suspicion of an ill-natured application. Thus some misers are ashamed of their wealth, and study to conceal it; as the malicious or selfish do their power: nay, this is very often done, where there is no positive evil intention; because the diminishing their abilities, increases the moral good of any little kind action, which they can find in their hearts to perform.

In short, we always see actions which flow from public love, accompanied with generous boldness and openness; and not only malicious, but even selfish ones, the matter of shame and confusion; and that men study to conceal them. The love of private pleasure is the ordinary occasion of vice; and when men have got any lively notions of virtue, they generally begin to be ashamed of every thing which betrays selfishness, even in instances where it is innocent. We are apt to imagine, that others observing us in such pursuits, form mean opinions of us, as too much set on private pleasure; and hence we shall find such enjoyments, in most polite nations, concealed from those who do not partake with us. Such are venereal pleasures between persons married, and even eating and drinking alone, any nicer sorts of meats or drinks: whereas a hospitable table is rather matter of boasting; and so are all other kind generous offices between married persons, where there is no suspicion of self-love in the agent; but he is imagined as acting from love to his associate. This strengthens the natural modesty in civilized nations, as habits and education improve it; so that we are now ashamed of many things, upon some confused implicit opinions of moral evil, though we know not upon what account.

Here too we may see the reason, *Honour and shame* why we are not ashamed of any of *often from some as-* the methods of grandeur, or high- *sociations of ideas.*

living. There is such a mixture of moral ideas, of benevolence, of abilities kindly employed; so many dependants supported, so many friends entertained, assisted, protected; such a capacity imagined for great and amiable actions, that we are never ashamed, but rather boast of such things. We never affect obscurity or concealment, but rather desire that our state and magnificence should be known. Were it not for this conjunction of moral ideas, no mortal could bear the drudgery of state, or abstain from laughing at those who did. Could any man be pleased with a company of statues surrounding his table, so artfully contrived as to consume his various courses, and inspired by some servant, like so many puppets, to give the usual trifling returns in praise of their fare? Or with so many machines to perform the cringes and whispers of a levee?

The shame we suffer from the meanness of dress, table, equipage, is intirely owing to the same reason. This meanness is often imagined to argue avarice, meanness of spirit, want of capacity, or conduct in life, of industry, or moral abilities of one kind or other. To confirm this, let us observe that men will glory in the meanness of their fare, when it was occasioned by a good action. How many would be ashamed to be surprized at a dinner of cold meat, who will boast of their having fed upon dogs and horses at the siege of Derry? And they will all tell you, that they were not, nor are ashamed of it.

This ordinary connexion in our imagination, between external grandeur, regularity in dress, equipage, retinue, badges of honour, and some moral abilities greater than ordinary, is perhaps of more consequence in the world than some recluse philosophers apprehend, who pique themselves upon despising these external shews. This may possibly be a great, if not the only cause of what some count miraculous, viz. That civil governors of no greater capacity than their neighbours, by some inexpressible awe and authority, quell the spirits of the vulgar, and keep them in subjection by such small guards, as might easily be conquered by those associations of the disaffected, or factious of any state; who are daring enough among their equals, and shew a sufficient contempt of death for undertaking such an enterprize.

Hence also we may discover the reason, why the gratifying our superior senses of beauty and harmony, or the enjoyment of the pleasure of knowledge, never occasions any shame or confusion, though our enjoyment were known to all the world. The objects which furnish this pleasure, are of such a nature, as to afford the same delights to multitudes; nor is there any thing in the enjoyment of them by one, which excludes any mortal from a like enjoyment. So that, although we pursue these enjoyments from self-love, yet, since our enjoyment cannot be prejudicial to others, no man is imagined any way inhumanly selfish, from the fullest enjoyment of them which is possible. The same regu-

larity or harmony which delights me, may at the same time delight multitudes; the same theorem shall be equally fruitful of pleasure, when it has entertained thousands. Men therefore are not ashamed of such pursuits, since they never, of themselves, seduce us into any thing malicious, envious, or ill-natured; nor does any one apprehend another too selfish, from his pursuing objects of unexhausted universal pleasure*.

This view of honour and shame may also let us see the reason, why most men are uneasy at being praised, when they themselves are present. Every one is delighted with the esteem of others, and must enjoy great pleasure when he hears himself commended; but we are unwilling others should observe our enjoyment of this pleasure, which is really selfish; or that they should imagine us fond of it, or influenced by hopes of it in our good actions: and therefore we choose secrecy for the enjoyment of it, as we do with respect to other pleasures, in which others do not share with us.

Compassion a motive to virtue.

VIII. LET us next consider another determination of our mind, which strongly proves benevolence to be natural to us, and that is *compassion*; by which we are disposed to study the interest of others, without any views of private advantage. This needs little illustration. Every mortal is made uneasy by any griev-

* See another reason of this, perhaps more probably true, in the Essay on the Passions, p. 6.

ous misery he sees another involved in, unless the person be imagined morally evil: nay, it is almost impossible for us to be unmoved, even in that case. Advantage may make us do a cruel action, or may overcome pity; but it scarce ever extinguishes it. A sudden passion of hatred or anger may represent a person as absolutely evil, and so extinguish pity; but when the passion is over, it often returns. Another disinterested view may even in cold blood overcome pity; such as love to our country, or zeal for religion. Persecution is generally occasioned by love of virtue, and a desire of the eternal happiness of mankind, although our folly makes us choose absurd means to promote it; and is often accompany'd with pity enough to make the persecutor uneasy, in what, for prepollent reasons, he chooses; unless his opinion leads him to look upon the heretic as absolutely and intirely evil.

We may here observe, how wonderfully the constitution of human nature is adapted to move compassion. Our misery or distress immediately appears in our countenance, if we do not study to prevent it, and propagates some pain to all spectators; who, from observation, universally understand the meaning of those dismal airs. We mechanically send forth shrieks and groans upon any surprizing apprehension of evil; so that no regard to decency can sometimes restrain them. This is the voice of nature, understood by all nations, by which all who are present are roused to our assistance, and sometimes our injurious enemy is made to relent.

We observed above *, that we are not immediately excited by compassion to desire the removal of our own pain: we think it just to be so affected upon the occasion, and dislike those who are not so. But we are excited directly to desire the relief of the miserable; without any imagination, that this relief is a private good to ourselves: and if we see this impossible, we may by reflection discern it to be vain for us to indulge our compassion any farther; and then self-love prompts us to retire from the object which occasions our pain, and to endeavour to divert our thoughts. But where there is no such reflection, people are hurried by a natural kind instinct, to see objects of compassion, and expose themselves to this pain, when they can give no reason for it; as in the instance of public executions.

This same principle leads men to tragedies; only we are to observe, that another strong reason of this is the moral beauty of the characters and actions, which we love to behold. For I doubt, whether any audience would be pleased to see fictitious scenes of misery, if they were kept strangers to the moral qualities of the sufferers, or their characters and actions. As in such a case, there would be no beauty to raise desire of seeing such representations, I fancy we would not expose ourselves to pain alone, from misery which we knew to be fictitious.

* See sect. ii. art. 8. par. 2.

It was the same cause which crouded the Roman theatres to see gladiators. There the people had frequent instances of great courage, and contempt of death, two great moral abilities, if not virtues. Hence Cicero looks upon them as great instructions in fortitude. The antagonist gladiator bore all the blame of the cruelty committed, among people of little reflection; and the courageous and artful one, really obtained a reputation of virtue, and favour among the spectators, and was vindicated by the necessity of self-defence. In the mean time they were inadvertent to this, that their crouding to such fights, and favouring the persons who presented them with such spectacles of courage, and with opportunities of following their natural instinct to compassion, was the true occasion of all the real distress, or assaults which they were sorry for.

What sentiments can we imagine a candidate would have raised of himself, had he presented his countrymen only with scenes of misery; had he drained hospitals and infirmaries of all their pityable inhabitants, or had he bound so many slaves, and without any resistance, butchered them with his own hands? I should very much question the success of his election, (however compassion or curiosity might cause his shews still to be frequented) if his antagonist chose a diversion apparently more virtuous, or with a mixture of scenes of virtue.

How independent this disposition to compassion is on custom, education, or instruction, will appear from the prevalence

*Compassion
natural.*

of it in women and children, who are less influenced by these. That children delight in some actions which are cruel and tormenting to animals which they have in their power, flows not from malice, or want of compassion, but from their ignorance of those signs of pain which many creatures make; together with a curiosity to see the various contortions of their bodies. For when they are more acquainted with these creatures, or come by any means to know their sufferings, their compassion often becomes too strong for their reason; as it generally does in beholding executions, where as soon as they observe the evidences of distress, or pain in the malefactor, they are apt to condemn this necessary method of self-defence in the state. Some have alleged, that “ however the sight of another’s misery
“ some way or other gives us pain, yet the very feeling of compassion is also attended with pleasure:
“ this pleasure is superior to the pain of sympathy, and
“ hence we desire to raise compassion in ourselves, and
“ incline to indulge it.” Were this truly the case, the continuation of the suffering would be the natural desire of the compassionate, in order to continue this state, not of pure pleasure indeed, but of pleasure superior to all pains.

S E C T. VI.

Concerning the Importance of this moral Sense to the present Happiness of Mankind, and its Influence on human Affairs.

I. **I**T may now probably appear, that notwithstanding the corruption of manners so justly complained of everywhere, this moral sense has a greater influence on mankind than is generally imagined, altho' it is often directed by very partial imperfect views of public good, and often overcome by self-love. But we shall offer some farther considerations to prove, "That it gives us more pleasure and pain, than all our other faculties." And to prevent repetitions, let us observe, "That where-ever any morally good quality gives pleasure from reflection, or from honour, the contrary evil one will give proportionable pain, from remorse and shame." Now we shall consider the moral pleasures, not only seperately, but as they are the most delightful ingredient in the ordinary pleasures of life.

*Importance
of the mo-
ral sense.*

All men seem persuaded of some excellency in the possession of good moral qualitys, which is superior to all other enjoyments; and on the contrary, look upon a state of moral evil, as worse and more wretched than any other whatsoever. We must not form our judg-

ment in this matter from the actions of men; for, however they may be influenced by moral sentiments, yet it is certain, that self-interested passions frequently overcome them, and partial views of the tendency of actions, make us do what is really morally evil, apprehending it to be good. But let us examine the sentiments which men universally form of the state of others, when they are no way immediately concerned; for in these sentiments human nature is calm and undisturbed, and shews its true face.

Now should we imagine a rational creature in a sufficiently happy state, whose mind was, without interruption, wholly occupied with pleasant sensations of smell, taste, touch, &c. if at the same time all other ideas were excluded? should we not think the state low, mean, and sordid, if there were no society, no love or friendship, no good offices? What then must that state be, wherein there are no pleasures but those of the external senses, with such long intervals as human nature at present must have? Do these short fits of pleasure make the luxurious happy? How insipid and joyless are the reflections on past pleasure! and how poor a recompence is the return of the transient sensation, for the nauseous satieties, and languors in the intervals! This frame of our nature, so incapable of long enjoyments of the external senses, points out to us, "That there must be some other more durable
"pleasure, without such tedious interruptions, and
"nauseous reflections."

Let us even join with the pleasures of the external senses, the perceptions of beauty, order, harmony. These are, no doubt, more noble pleasures, and seem to enlarge the mind; and yet how cold and joyless are they, if there be no moral pleasures of friendship, love and beneficence! Now, if the bare absence of moral good makes, in our judgment, the state of a rational agent contemptible; the presence of contrary dispositions is always imagined by us to sink him into a degree of misery, from which no other pleasures can relieve him. Would we ever wish to be in the same condition with a wrathful, malicious, revengeful, or envious being, though we were at the same time to enjoy all the pleasures of the external and internal senses? The internal pleasures of beauty and harmony contribute greatly indeed toward soothing the mind into a forgetfulness of wrath, malice or revenge; and they must do so, before we can have any tolerable delight or enjoyment: for while these affections possess the mind, there is nothing but torment and misery.

Castle-builders prove it. What castle-builder, who forms to himself imaginary scenes of life, in which he thinks he should be happy, ever made acknowledged treachery, cruelty, or ingratitude, the steps by which he mounted to his wished-for elevation, or parts of his character, when he had attained it? We always conduct ourselves in such reserves, according to the dictates of honour, faith, generosity,

courage; and the lowest we can sink, is hoping we may be enriched by some innocent accident.

“ O si urnam argenti foras qua mihi monstret * ! ” —
 But labour, hunger, thirst, poverty, pain, danger, have nothing so detestable in them, that our self-love cannot allow us to be often exposed to them. On the contrary, the virtues which these give us occasions of displaying, are so amiable and excellent, that scarce ever is any imaginary hero, in romance or epic, brought to his highest pitch of happiness, without going through them all. Where there is no virtue, there is nothing worth desire or contemplation; the romance or epos must end. Nay, the difficulty †, or natural evil, does so much increase the virtue of the good action which it accompanies, that we cannot easily sustain these works after the distress is over; and if we continue the work, it must be by presenting a new scene of benevolence, in a prosperous fortune. A scene of external prosperity or natural good, without any thing moral or virtuous, cannot entertain a person of the dullest imagination, had he ever so much interested himself in the fortunes of his hero; for where virtue ceases, there remains nothing worth wishing to our favourite, or which we can be delighted to view his possession of, when we are most studious of his happiness.

Virtue owned Let us take a particular instance, to
superior to all try how much we prefer the possession
pleasure. of virtue to all other enjoyments, and

* Hor. lib. 2. sat. 6. ver. 10.

† Sect. iii. art. 11. axiom 6.

how we look upon vice as worse than any other misery. Who could ever read the history of Regulus, as related by Cicero, and some others, without concerning himself in the fortunes of that gallant man, sorrowing at his sufferings, and wishing him a better fate? But how better a fate? should he have complied with the terms of the Carthaginians, and preserved himself from the intended tortures, though to the detriment of his country? Or should he have violated his plighted faith, and promise of returning? Will any man say, that either of these is the better fate he wishes his favourite? Had he acted thus, that virtue would have been gone, which interests every one in his fortunes.—“Let him take his fate like other common mortals.”—What else do we wish then, but that the Carthaginians had relented of their cruelty, or that Providence, by some unexpected event, had rescued him out of their hands?

Now may not this teach us, that we are indeed determined to judge virtue with peace and safety, preferable to virtue with distress; but that at the same time we look upon the state of the virtuous, the public-spirited, even in the utmost natural distress, as preferable to all affluence of other enjoyments? For this is what we chuse to have our favourite hero in, notwithstanding all its pains, and natural evils. We should never have imagined him happier, had he acted otherwise; or thought him in a more eligible state, with liberty and safety, at the expence of his virtue. We secretly judge the purchase too dear; and therefore we never imagine he acted foolishly in securing his virtue, his ho-

nour, at the expence of his ease, his pleasure, his life. Nor can we think these latter enjoyments worth the keeping, when the former are intirely lost.

Necessary in other pleasures. II. LET us in the same manner examine our sentiments of the happiness of others in common life. *Wealth and external pleasures* bear no small bulk in our imaginations; but does there not always accompany this opinion of happiness in wealth, some supposed beneficent intention of doing good offices to persons dear to us, at least to our families or kinsmen? And in our imagined happiness from external pleasure, are not some ideas always included of some moral enjoyments of society, some communication of pleasure, something of love, of friendship, of esteem, of gratitude? Who ever pretended to a taste of these pleasures without society? Or if any seem violent in pursuit of them, how base and contemptible do they appear to all persons, even to those who could have no expectation of advantage from their having a more generous notion of pleasure?

Now, were there no moral sense, no happiness in benevolence, and did we act from no other principle than self-love; sure there is no pleasure of the external senses, which we could not enjoy alone, with less trouble and expence than in society. But a mixture of the moral pleasures is what gives the alluring relish; it is some appearance of friendship, of love, of communicating pleasure to others, which preserves the pleasures of the luxurious from being nauseous and insipid. And

this partial imagination of some good moral qualities, some benevolence, in actions which have many cruel, inhuman, and destructive consequences toward others, is what has kept vice more in countenance than any other consideration*.

But to convince us farther wherein the happiness of wealth, and external pleasure lies; let us but suppose malice, wrath, revenge; or only solitude, absence of friendship, of love, of society, of esteem, joined with the possession of them; and all the happiness vanishes like a dream. And yet love, friendship, society, humanity, though accompanied with poverty and toil, nay even with smaller degrees of pain, such as do not wholly occupy the mind, are not only the object of love from others, but even of a sort of emulation: which plainly shews, "That virtue is the chief happiness in
" the judgment of all mankind."

III. THERE is a farther consideration which must not be pass'd over, concerning the *external beauty* of persons, which all allow to have a great power over human minds. Now it is some apprehended morality, some natural or imagined indication of concomitant virtue, which gives it this powerful charm above all other kinds of beauty. Let us consider the characters of beauty, which are commonly admired in countenances, and we shall find them to be sweetness, mildness, majesty, dignity, vivacity,

*The charm
in beauty.*

* See above, sect. iv. art. 4. par 4, 5.

humility, tenderness, good-nature; that is, that certain airs, proportions, *je ne sçai quoy's*, are natural indications of such virtues, or of abilities or dispositions toward them. As we observed above * of misery or distress appearing in countenances; so it is certain, almost all habitual dispositions of mind form the countenance in such a manner, as to give some indications of them to the spectator. Our violent passions are obvious at first view in the countenance; so that sometimes no art can conceal them: and smaller degrees of them give some less obvious turns to the face, which an accurate eye will observe. Now, when the natural air of a face approaches to that which any passion would form it unto, we make a conjecture from this concerning the leading disposition of the person's mind.

As to those fancies which prevail in certain countries toward large lips, little noses, narrow eyes; unless we knew from themselves under what idea such features are admired, whether as naturally beautiful in form, or proportion to the rest of the face; or as presumed indications of some moral qualities; we may more probably conclude that it is the latter; since this is so much the ground of approbation or aversion towards faces among ourselves. And as to those features which we count naturally disagreeable as to form, we know the aversion on this account is so weak, that moral qualities shall procure a liking even to the face, in persons

* See sect. v. art. 3. par. 2.

who are sensible of the irregularity, or want of that regularity which is common in others. With us, certain features are imagined to denote dullness; as hollow eyes, large lips; a colour of hair, wantonness; and may we not conclude the like association of ideas, upon some probable foundation in nature, and sometimes without any, to be the ground of those approbations which appear unaccountable to us?

In the same manner, when there is nothing grossly disproportioned in any face, what is it we dispraise? Is it pride, haughtiness, sourness, ill-nature, discontent, folly, levity, wantonness; which some countenances discover in the manner above hinted at? And these airs, when brought by custom upon the most regular set of features, have often made them very disagreeable; as the contrary airs have given the strongest charms to countenances, which were far from perfection in external beauty. Had Homer, in his character of Helen, raised our idea of her external beauty to the greatest height, yet it would have been ridiculous to have engaged his countrymen in a war for such a Helen as Virgil has drawn her. He therefore still retains something morally amiable amidst all her weakness, and often suggests to his reader,

—— Ἑλένης ὀρμήματά τε σοναχάς τε ‡,

as the spring of his countrymens indignation and revenge.

‡ See Homer, *Iliad* 2. vet. 356, 396.

*The cause of
different fan-
cies of beauty.*

This consideration may shew us one reason, among many others, for mens different fancies, or relishes of beauty. The mind of man, however generally disposed to esteem benevolence and virtue, yet by more particular attention to some kinds of it than others, may gain a stronger admiration of some moral dispositions than others. Military men may admire courage more than other virtues; persons of smaller courage, may admire sweetness of temper; men of thought and reflection, who have more extensive views, will admire the like qualities in others; men of keen passions expect equal returns of all the kind affections, and are wonderfully charmed by compliance: the proud may like those of higher spirit, as more suitable to their dignity; though pride, joined with reflection and good sense, will recommend to them humility in the person beloved. Now as the various tempers of men make various tempers of others agreeable to them, so they must differ in their relishes of beauty, according as it denotes the several qualities most agreeable to themselves.

This may also shew us, how, in virtuous love, there may be the greatest beauty, without the least charm to engage a rival. Love itself gives a beauty to the lover, in the eyes of the person beloved, which no other mortal is much affected with. And this perhaps is the strongest charm possible, and that which will have the greatest power, where there is not some very great counterbalance from worldly interest, vice, or gross deformity.

IV. THIS same consideration may be extended to the whole air and motion of any person. Every thing we count agreeable, some way denotes chearfulness, ease, a condescension, and readiness to oblige, a love of company, with a freedom and boldness which always accompanies an honest, undesigning heart. On the contrary, what is shocking in air or motion, is roughness, ill nature, a disregard to others, or a foolish shame-facedness, which evidences a person to be unexperienced in society, or offices of humanity.

With relation to these airs, motions, gestures, we may observe, that considering the different ceremonies and modes of shewing respect, which are practised in different nations, we may indeed probably conclude, that there is no natural connection between any of these gestures or motions, and the affections of mind which they are by custom made to express. But when custom has made any of them pass for expressions of such affections, by a constant association of ideas, some shall become agreeable and lovely, and others extremely offensive, although they were both, in their own nature, perfectly indifferent.

V. HERE we may remark the manner in which nature leads mankind to the continuance of their race, and by its strongest power engages them to what occasions the greatest toil and anxiety of life; and yet supports them under it with an inexpressible delight,

Air, motion, gestures.

The spring of love between the sexes.

We might have been excited to the propagation of our species, by such an uneasy sensation as would have effectually determined us to it, without any great prospect of happiness; as we see hunger and thirst determine us to preserve our bodies, though few look upon eating and drinking as any considerable happiness. The sexes might have been engaged to concurrence, as we imagine the brutes are, by desire only, or by a love of sensual pleasure. But how dull and insipid had life been, were there no more in marriage! Who would have had resolution enough to bear all the cares of a family, and education of children? Or who, from the general motive of benevolence alone, would have chosen to subject himself to natural affection toward an offspring, when he could so easily foresee what troubles it might occasion?

This inclination therefore of the sexes, is founded on something stronger, and more efficacious and joyful, than the solicitations of uneasiness, or the bare desire of sensible pleasure. Beauty gives a favourable presumption of good moral dispositions, and acquaintance confirms this into a real love of esteem, or begets it, where there is little beauty. This raises an expectation of the greatest moral pleasures along with the sensible, and a thousand tender sentiments of humanity and generosity; and makes us impatient for a society which we imagine big with unspeakable moral pleasures: where nothing is indifferent, and every trifling service, being an evidence of this strong love and esteem, is mu-

usually receiv'd with the rapture and gratitude of the greatest benefit, and of the most substantial obligation; and where prudence and good nature influence both sides, this society may answer all their expectations.

Nay, let us examine those of looser conduct with relation to the fair sex, and we shall find, that love of sensible pleasure is not the chief motive of debauchery, or false gallantry. Were it so, the meanest prostitutes would please as much as any. But we know sufficiently, that men are fond of good nature, faith, pleasantry of temper, wit, and many other moral qualities, even in a mistress. And this may furnish us with a reason for what appears pretty unaccountable, viz. "That chastity itself has a powerful charm in the eyes of the dissolute, even when they are attempting to destroy it."

This powerful determination even to a limited benevolence, and other moral sentiments, is observ'd to give a strong bias to our minds towards an universal goodness, tenderness, humanity, generosity, and contempt of private good in our whole conduct; besides the obvious improvement it occasions in our external deportment, and in our relish of beauty, order, and harmony. As soon as a heart, before hard and obdurate, is soften'd in this flame, we shall observe, arising along with it, a love of poetry, music, the beauty of nature in rural scenes, a contempt of other selfish pleasures of the external senses, a neat dress, a humane deportment, a delight in, and emulation of, every thing

which is gallant, generous, and friendly.

Society, friendships, from our moral sense.

In the same manner we are determin'd to common friendships and acquaintances, not by the fullen apprehensions of our necessities, or prospects of interest; but by an incredible variety of little, agreeable, engaging evidences of love, good nature, and other morally amiable qualitys in those we converse with. Among the rest, none of the least considerable is an inclination to chearfulness, a delight to raise mirth in others, which procures a secret approbation and gratitude toward the person who puts us in such an agreeable, innocent, good-natur'd, and easy state of mind, as we are conscious of, while we enjoy pleasant conversation, enliven'd by moderate laughter.

The power of oratory founded on it.

VI. UPON this moral sense is founded all the power of the orator. The various figures of speech are the several manners, which a lively genius, warmed with passions suitable to the occasion, naturally runs into, only a little diversify'd by custom: and they only move the hearers, by giving a lively representation of the passions of the speaker; which are communicated to the hearers, as we * observed above of one passion, viz. pity.

Now the passions which the orator attempts to raise,

* See sect v. art. 8. par. 2.

are all founded on moral qualitys: All the bold metaphors, or descriptions, all the artificial manners of expostulation, arguing, and addressing the audience, all the appeals to mankind, are but more lively methods of giving the audience a stronger impression of the moral qualitys of the person accus'd or defended; of the action advis'd, or dissuaded: and all the antitheses, or witticisms; all the cadences of sonorous periods, whatever inferior kind of beauty they may have separately, are of no consequence to persuade, if we neglect moving the passions by some species of morality. They may perhaps raise a little admiration of the speaker, among those who already favour his party, but they oftener raise contempt in his adversaries. But when you display the beneficence of any action, the good effect it shall have on the public in promoting the welfare of the innocent, and relieving the unjustly distressed; if you prove your allegations, you make every mortal approve the undertaking it. When any person is to be recommended, display his humanity, generosity, study of the public good, and capacity to promote it, his contempt of dangers, and private pleasures; and you are sure to procure him love and esteem. If at the same time you shew his distress, or the injurys he has suffer'd, you raise pity, and every tender affection.

On the contrary, represent the barbarity, or cruelty of any action, the misery it shall procure to the kind, the faithful, the generous, or only to the innocent; and you raise an abhorrence of it in the breasts of the audi-

ence, though they were not the persons who would have suffer'd by it. The same way, would you make a person infamous, and despis'd and hated, represent him as cruel, inhumane, or treacherous toward the most distant rational agents; or shew him only to be selfish, and given to solitary luxury, without regard to any friend, or the interest of others; and you have gain'd your point, as soon as you prove what you alledge. Nay, how does it stop our admiration of any celebrated action, to suggest, "That the author of it was no fool; he knew it would turn to his own advantage!"

Now, are the learned and polite the only persons who are mov'd by such speeches? Must men know the schemes of the moralists and politicians, or the art of rhetoric, to be capable of being persuaded? Must they be nicely conversant in all the methods of promoting of self-interest? Nay, do we not see on the contrary, the rude undisciplin'd multitude most affected? Where had oratory so much power as in popular states, and that too before the perfection of the sciences? Reflection and study may raise in men a suspicion of design, and caution of assent, when they have some knowledge of the various topics of argument, and find them employ'd upon themselves: but rude nature is still open to every moral impression, and carry'd furiously along without caution, or suspense. It was not the groves of the Academy, or the polish'd stones of the Portico, or the manag'd horses of Greece, which listen'd to the harp of an Amphion, or an Orpheus; but the trees,

and rocks, and tygers of the forest : which may shew us, " That there is some sense of morality antecedent " to instruction, or metaphysical arguments proving " the private interest of the person who is persuaded, " to be connected with the public good."

VII. We shall find this sense to be the foundation also of the chief pleasures of poetry. We hinted, in the former treatise, at the foundation of delight in the

Poetry pleases from this moral sense.

numbers, measures, metaphors, similitudes*. But as the contemplation of moral objects, either of vice or virtue, affects us more strongly, and moves our passions in a quite different and a more powerful manner, than natural beauty, or (what we commonly call) deformity; so the most moving beautys bear a relation to our moral sense, and affect us more vehemently, than the representations of natural objects in the liveliest descriptions. Dramatic and epic poetry are intirely address'd to this sense, and raise our passions by the fortunes of characters, distinctly represented as morally good or evil; as might be seen more fully, were we to consider the passions separately.

Where we are studying to raise any desire, or admiration of an object really beautiful, we are not content with a bare narration, but endeavour, if we can, to present the object itself, or the most lively image of it. And hence the epic poem, or tragedy, gives a far

* See treatise I. sect. ii. art. 13. sect. iv. art 3.

greater pleasure than the writings of philosophers, tho' both aim at recommending virtue. The representing the actions themselves, if the representation be judicious, natural, and lively, will make us admire the good, and detest the vicious, the inhuman, the treacherous and cruel, by means of our moral sense, without any reflections of the poet to guide our sentiments. It is for this reason that Horace has justly made knowledge in morals so necessary to a good poet :

“ Scribendi recte SAPERE est et principium et fons*.

And again :

“ Qui didicit patriae quid debeat, et quid amicis,

“ Quo sit amore parens, quo frater amandus, et
“ hospes,

“ Quod sit conscripti, quod judicis officium, quae

“ Partes in bellum missi ducis ; ille profecto

“ Reddere personae scit convenientia cuique †.”

*Imagery in
poetry found-
ed on the mo-
ral sense.*

Upon this same sense is founded the power of that great beauty in poetry, the *prosopopoeia*, by which every affection is made a person ; every natural event, cause, object, is animated by moral epithets. For we join the contemplation of moral circumstances and qualities, along with natural objects, to increase their beauty or deformity ; and we affect the hearer in a more lively manner with the affections

* Hor. de arte poet. ver. 309.

† Hor. de arte poet. ver. 312, &c.

describ'd, by representing them as persons. Thus a shady wood must have its solemn venerable genius, and proper rural gods; every clear fountain, its sacred chaste nymph; and river, its bountiful god, with his urn, and perhaps a cornucopiae diffusing plenty and fruitfulness along its banks. The day-light is holy, benign, and powerful to banish the pernicious spirits of the night. The morning is a kind officious goddess, tripping over the dewy mountains, and ushering in light to gods and men. War is an impetuous, cruel, undistinguishing monster, whom no virtue, no circumstance of compassion, can move from his bloody purposes. The steel is unrelenting; the arrow and spear are impatient to destroy, and carry death on their points. Our modern engines of war are also frightful personages, counterfeiting with their rude throats the thunder of Jove. The moral imagery of death is everywhere known, viz. his insensibility to pity, his inflexibility, and universal impartial empire. Fortune is inimitably drawn by Horace *, with all her retinue and votarys, and with her rigid severe minister, necessity. The qualities of mind too become persons. Love becomes a Venus, or a Cupid; courage, or conduct, a Mars, or a Pallas, protecting and assisting the hero; before them march terror and dread, flight and pursuit, shouts and amazement. Nay, the most sacred poets are often led into this imagery, and represent

* See lib. i. od. 35.

justice and judgment, as supporting the Almighty's throne, and mercy and truth going before his face: they shew us peace as springing up from the earth, and mercy looking down from heaven.

Every one perceives a greater beauty in this manner of representation, this imagery, this conjunction of moral ideas, than in the fullest narration, or the most lively natural description. When one reads the fourth book of Homer, and is prepar'd, from the council of the gods, to imagine the bloody sequel, and amidst the most beautiful description which ever was imagin'd of shooting an arrow, meets with its moral epithet,

—————μελαινῶν ἔρμ' ὀδυνῶν*,

—————"The source of blackest woes;"

he will find himself more mov'd by this circumstance, than by all the profusion of natural description which man could imagine.

History. VIII. HISTORY derives its chief excellence from the representing the manners and characters; the contemplation of which in nature being very affecting, they must necessarily give pleasure, when well related.

Painting. IX. IT is well known too, that a collection of the best pieces of face-painting is but a poor entertainment, when compar'd with those pieces which represent moral actions, passions, and characters.

* See Homer, Iliad iv. ver. 217.

S E C T. VII.

A deduction of some complex moral ideas ; viz. of obligation, and right, perfect, imperfect, and external, alienable, and unalienable, from this moral sense.

I. **T**O conclude this subject, we may, from what has been said, see the true original of moral ideas, viz. This moral sense of excellence in every appearance, or evidence of benevolence. It remains to be explain'd, how we acquire more particular ideas of virtue and vice, abstracting from any law, human, or divine.

If any one ask, can we have any sense of obligation, abstracting from the laws of *Obligation.* a superior? We must answer according to the various senses of the word obligation. If by obligation we understand a determination, without regard to our own interest, to approve actions, and to perform them; which determination shall also make us displeas'd with ourselves, and uneasy upon having acted contrary to it: in this meaning of the word obligation, there is naturally an obligation upon all men to benevolence; and they are still under its influence, even when by false, or partial opinions of the natural tendency of their actions, this moral sense leads them to evil; unless by long inveterate habits it be exceedingly weaken'd; for it scarce seems possible wholly to ex-

tinguish it. Or, which is to the same purpose, this internal sense, and instinct of benevolence, will either influence our actions, or make us very uneasy and dissatisfy'd; and we shall be conscious, that we are in a base unhappy state, even without considering any law whatsoever, or any external advantages lost, or disadvantages impending from its sanctions. And farther, there are still such indications given us of what is in the whole beneficent, and what not, as may probably discover to us the true tendency of every action; and let us see, sometime or other, the evil tendency of what upon a partial view appear'd good: or if we have no friends so faithful as to admonish us, the persons injur'd will not fail to upbraid us. So that no mortal can secure to himself a perpetual serenity, satisfaction, and self-approbation, but by a serious inquiry into the tendency of his actions, and a perpetual study of universal good, according to the justest notions of it.

But if, by obligation, we understand a motive from self-interest, sufficient to determine all those who duly consider it, and pursue their own advantage wisely, to a certain course of actions; we may have a sense of such an obligation, by reflecting on this determination of our nature to approve virtue, to be pleas'd and happy when we reflect upon our having done virtuous actions, and to be uneasy when we are conscious of having acted otherwise; and also by considering how much superior we esteem the happiness of virtue to any other enjoyment*.

* See above, sect. vi. art. 1, 2.

We may likewise have a sense of this sort of obligation, by considering those reasons which prove a constant course of benevolent and social actions, to be the most probable means of promoting the natural good of every individual; as Cumberland and Puffendorf have prov'd: and all this without relation to a law.

But farther, if our moral sense be suppos'd exceedingly weakned, and the selfish passions grown strong, either through some general corruption of nature, or inveterate habits; if our understanding be weak, and we be often in danger of being hurry'd by our passions into precipitate and rash judgments, that malicious actions shall promote our advantage more than beneficence; in such a case, if it be inquir'd what is necessary to engage men to beneficent actions, or induce a steady sense of an obligation to act for the public good; then, no doubt, "A law with sanctions, given by a superior being, of sufficient power to make us happy or miserable, must be necessary to counterbalance those apparent motives of interest, to calm our passions, and give room for the recovery of our moral sense, or at least for a just view of our interest."

II. Now the principal business of the moral philosopher is to shew, from solid reasons, "That universal benevolence tends to the happiness of the benevolent, either from the pleasures of reflection, honour, natural tendency to engage the good offices of men, upon whose aid we must depend for our happiness in

*How far
virtue can
be taught.*

“ this world ; or from the sanctions of divine laws discover’d to us by the constitution of the universe ;” that so no apparent views of interest may counteract this natural inclination : but not to attempt proving, “ That prospects of our own advantage of any kind can raise in us the virtuous benevolence toward others.” Let the obstacles from self-love be only remov’d and nature itself will incline us to benevolence. Let the misery of excessive selfishness, and all its passions, be but once explain’d, that so self-love may cease to counteract our natural propensity to benevolence ; and when this noble disposition gets loose from these bonds of ignorance, and false views of interest, it shall be assisted even by self-love, and grow strong enough to make a noble virtuous character. Then he is to enquire, by reflection upon human affairs, what course of action does most effectually promote the universal good, what universal rules or maxims are to be observ’d, and in what circumstances the reason of them alters, so as to admit exceptions ; that so our good inclinations may be directed by reason, and a just knowledge of the interests of mankind. But virtue itself, or good dispositions of mind, are not directly taught, or produced by instruction ; they must be originally implanted in our nature by its great Author, and afterwards strengthen’d and confirm’d by our own cultivation.

Objection. III. WE are often told, “ That there is no need of supposing such a sense of mo-

“rality given to men, since reflection and instruction
 “would recommend the same actions from arguments
 “of self-interest, and engage us, from the acknow-
 “ledg’d principles of self-love, to the practice of them,
 “without this unintelligible determination to benevo-
 “lence, or the occult quality of a moral sense.”

It is perhaps true, that reflection, and reason might lead us to approve the same actions as advantageous. But would not the same reflection and reason likewise generally recommend the same meats to us, which our taste represents as pleasant? And shall we thence conclude, that we have no sense of tasting, or that such a sense is useless? No: the use is plain in both cases. Notwithstanding the mighty reason we boast of above other animals, its processes are too slow, too full of doubt and hesitation, to serve us in every exigency, either for our own preservation, without the external senses, or to influence our actions for the good of the whole, without this moral sense. Nor could we be so strongly determin’d at all times to what is most conducive to either of these ends, without these expeditious monitors, and importunate solicitors; nor so nobly rewarded, when we act vigorously in pursuit of these ends, by the calm dull reflections of self-interest, as by those delightful sensations.

*Moral sense,
not from re-
flection.*

This natural determination to approve and admire, or hate and dislike actions, is, no doubt, an occult quality. But is it any way more mysterious, that the idea

of an action should raise esteem or contempt, than that the motion or tearing of flesh should give pleasure or pain; or the act of volition should move flesh and bones? In the latter case, we have got the brain, and elastic fibres, and animal spirits, and elastic fluids, like the Indian's elephant, and tortoise, to bear the burden of the difficulty: but go one step farther, and you find the whole as difficult as at first, and equally a mystery with this determination to love and approve, or condemn and despise actions and agents, without any views of interest, as they appear benevolent, or the contrary.

Some also object, That according to this account, brutes may be capable of virtue; and this is thought a great absurdity. But 'tis manifest, that, 1. Brutes are not capable of that, in which this scheme places the highest virtue, to wit, the calm motions of the will toward the good of others; if our common accounts of brutes are true, that they are merely led by particular passions toward present objects of sense. Again, 'tis plain there is something in certain tempers of brutes*, which engages our liking, and some lower good-will and esteem, though we do not usually call it virtue, nor do we call the sweeter dispositions of children virtue; and yet they are so very like the lower kinds of virtue, that I see no harm in calling them virtues. What if

* Cicero is not ashamed to say of some brutes, "*Videmus indicia pietatis, cognitionem, memoriam, desideria, — se-
ceta à voluptate humanarum simulacra virtutum.*" *De Finib. lib. ii. c. 33.*

there are low virtues in creatures void of reflection, incapable of knowing laws, or of being moved by their sanctions, or by example of rewards or punishments? Such creatures cannot be brought to a proper trial or judgment: laws, rewards, or punishments won't have these effects upon them, which they may have upon rational agents. Perhaps they are no farther rewarded or punished than by the immediate pleasure or pain of their actions, or what men immediately inflict upon them. Where is the harm of all this, that there are lower virtues, and lower vices, the rewarding or punishing of which, in creatures void of reason and reflection, can answer no wise end of government?

When they offer it as a presumption that there can be no such sense, antecedent to all prospect of interest, "That these actions for the most part are really advantageous, one way or other, to the actor, the approver, or mankind in general, by whose happiness our own state may be some way made better;" may we not ask, supposing the Deity intended to impress such a sense of something amiable in actions, (which is no impossible supposition) what sort of actions would a good God determine to approve? Must we deny the possibility of such a determination, if it did not lead us to admire actions of no advantage to mankind, or to love agents for their being eminent triflers? If then the actions which a wise and good God must determine us to approve, if he give us any such sense at all, must be actions useful to the public, this advantage can never be a reason against the sense itself. After the same

manner, we should deny all revelation, which taught us good sense, humanity, justice, and a rational worship, because reason and interest confirm and recommend such principles and services; and should greedily embrace every contradiction, foppery, and pageantry, as a truly divine institution, without any thing humane, or useful to mankind.

*Moral sense
judges of laws.*

IV. THE writers upon opposite schemes, who deduce all ideas of good and evil from the private advantage of the actor, or from relation to a law, and its sanctions, either known from reason or revelation, are perpetually recurring to this moral sense which they deny; not only in calling the laws of the Deity just and good, and alledging justice and right in the Deity to govern us; but by using a set of words which import something different from what they will allow to be their only meaning. Obligation, with them, is only such a constitution, either of nature, or some governing power, as makes it advantageous for the agent to act in a certain manner. Let this definition be substituted, wherever we meet with the words, ought, should, must, in a moral sense, and many of their sentences would seem very strange; as that the Deity must act rationally, must not, or ought not to punish the innocent, must make the state of the virtuous better than that of the wicked, must observe promises; substituting the definition of the words, must, ought, should, would make these sentences either ridiculous, or very disputable.

V. But that our first ideas of moral good depend not on laws, may plainly appear from our constant inquiries into the justice of laws themselves; and that not only of human laws, but of the divine. What else can be the meaning of that universal opinion, "That the laws of God are just, and holy, and good?" Human laws may be called good, because of their conformity to the divine. But to call the laws of the supreme Deity good, or holy, or just, if all goodness, holiness, and justice be constituted by laws, or the will of a superior any way reveal'd, must be an insignificant tautology, amounting to no more than this, "That God wills what he wills. Or, that his will is conformable to his will."

It must then first be suppos'd, that there is something in actions which is apprehended absolutely good; and this is benevolence, or desire of the public natural happiness of rational agents; and that our moral sense perceives this excellence: and then we call the laws of the Deity good, when we imagine that they are contriv'd to promote the public good in the most effectual and impartial manner. And the Deity is called morally good, when we apprehend that his whole providence tends to the universal happiness of his creatures; whence we conclude his benevolence, and desire in their happiness.

Some tell us, "That the goodness of the divine laws consists in their conformity to some essential rectitude of his nature." But they must excuse us from assenting to this, till they make us understand the

meaning of this metaphor, essential rectitude; and till we discern whether any thing more is meant by it than a perfectly wise, uniform, impartial benevolence.

Difference between constraint and obligation.

Hence we may see the difference between constraint and obligation. There is indeed no difference between constraint, and the second sense of the word obligation, viz. a constitution which makes an action eligible from self-interest, if we only mean external interest, distinct from the delightful consciousness which arises from the moral sense. The reader need scarcely be told, that by constraint, we do not understand an external force moving our limbs without our consent; for in that case we are not agents at all; but that constraint which arises from the threatening and presenting some evil, in order to make us act in a certain manner. And yet there seems an universally acknowledg'd difference between even this sort of constraint and obligation. We never say, we are oblig'd to do an action which we count base, but we may be constrain'd to it: we never say, that the divine laws, by their sanctions, constrain us, but oblige us; nor do we call obedience to the Deity constraint, unless by a metaphor, tho' many own they are influenced by fear of punishments. And yet supposing an almighty evil being should require, under grievous penaltys, treachery, cruelty, ingratitude, we would call this constraint. The difference is plainly this: when any sanctions co-operate with our moral sense, in exciting

us to actions which we count morally good, we say we are oblig'd; but when sanctions of rewards or punishments oppose our moral sense, then we say we are brib'd or constrain'd. In the former case we call the lawgiver good, as designing the public happiness; in the latter we call him evil, or unjust, for the suppos'd contrary intention. But were all our ideas of moral good and evil derived solely from opinions of private advantage or loss in actions, I see no possible difference which could be made in the meaning of these words.

VI. FROM this sense too we derive our *Rights.* ideas of rights. Whenever it appears to us, that a faculty of doing, demanding, or possessing any thing, universally allowed in certain circumstances, would in the whole tend to the general good, we say, that one in such circumstances has a right to do, possess, or demand that thing. And according as this tendency to the public good is greater or less, the right is greater or less.

The rights call'd perfect, are of such necessity to the public good, that the universal *Perfect rights.* violation of them would make human life intolerable; and it actually makes those miserable, whose rights are thus violated. On the contrary, to fulfil these rights in every instance, tends to the public good, either directly, or by promoting the innocent advantage of a part. Hence it plainly follows, "That to allow a violent defence, or prosecution of such rights, before
" civil government be constituted, cannot in any par-

“ ticular case be more detrimental to the public, than
“ the violation of them with impunity.” And as to
the general consequences, the universal use of force in
natural liberty, in pursuance of perfect rights, seems
exceedingly advantageous to the whole, by making
every one dread any attempts against the perfect rights
of others.

*Right of war,
and punishment.*

This is the moral effect which at-
tends proper injury, or a violation of
the perfect rights of others, viz. A
right to war, and all violence which is necessary to ob-
lige the injurious to repair the damage, and give secu-
rity against such offences for the future. This is the
sole foundation of the rights of punishing criminals, and
of violent prosecutions of our rights, in natural liberty.
And these rights, naturally residing in the persons in-
jur'd, or their voluntary, or invited assistants, to use
force according to the judgement of indifferent arbitra-
tors, being by the consent of the persons injur'd, trans-
ferr'd to the magistrate in a civil state, are the true
foundation of his right of punishment. Instances of
perfect rights are those to our lives; to the fruits of
our labours; to demand performance of contracts up-
on valuable considerations, from men capable of per-
forming them; to direct our own actions either for
public, or innocent private good, before we have sub-
mitted them to the direction of others in any measure:
and many others of like nature.

Imperfect rights are such as, when universally violated, would not necessarily make men miserable. These rights tend to the improvement and increase of positive good in any society, but are not absolutely necessary to prevent universal misery. The violation of them only disappoints men of the happiness expected from the humanity or gratitude of others; but does not deprive men of any good which they had before. From this description it appears, "That a violent prosecution of such rights would generally occasion greater evil than the violation of them." Besides, the allowing of force in such cases would deprive men of the greatest pleasure in actions of kindness, humanity, gratitude; which would cease to appear amiable, when men could be constrain'd to perform them. Instances of imperfect rights are those which the poor have to the charity of the wealthy; which all men have to offices of no trouble or expence to the performer; which benefactors have to returns of gratitude, and such-like.

The violation of imperfect rights only argues a man to have such weak benevolence, as not to study advancing the positive good of others, when in the least opposite to his own: but the violation of perfect rights argues the injurious person to be positively evil or cruel; or at least so immoderately selfish, as to be indifferent about the positive misery and ruin of others, when he imagines he can find his interest in it. In violating the former, we shew a weak desire of public hap-

*Imperfect
rights.*

piness, which every small view of private interest overbalances; but in violating the latter, we shew ourselves so intirely negligent of the misery of others, that views of increasing our own good overcome all our compassion toward their sufferings. Now as the absence of good is more easily borne than the presence of misery; so our good wishes toward the positive good of others, are weaker than our compassion toward their misery. He then who violates imperfect rights, shews that his self-love overcomes only the desire of positive good to others; but he who violates perfect rights, betrays such a selfish desire of advancing his own positive good, as overcomes all compassion toward the misery of others.

External rights. Beside these two sorts of rights, there is a third call'd external; as when the doing, possessing, or demanding of any thing, is really detrimental to the public in any particular instance, as being contrary to the imperfect right of another; but yet the universally denying men this faculty of doing, possessing, or demanding that thing, or of using force in pursuance of it, would do more mischief than all the evils to be fear'd from the use of this faculty. And hence it appears, "That there can be no right to use force in opposition even to external rights, since it tends to the universal good to allow force in pursuance of them."

Civil societys substitute actions in law, instead of the force allow'd in natural liberty.

Instances of external rights are these; that of a wealthy miser to recall his loan from the most industrious poor tradesman at any time; that of demanding the performance of a covenant too burdensome on one side; the right of a wealthy heir to refuse payment of any debts which were contracted by him under age, without fraud in the lender; the right of taking advantage of a positive law, contrary to what was equity antecedent to that law; as when a register'd deed takes place of one not register'd, although prior to it, and known to be so before the second contract.

Now, whereas no action, demand, or possession, can at once be either necessary to the public good, or conducive to it, and at the same time its contrary be either

*What rights
can be opposite.*

necessary or conducive to the same end; it follows,

“That there can be no opposition of perfect rights

“among themselves, of imperfect among themselves,

“or between perfect and imperfect rights.” But it

may often tend to the public good, to allow a right of

doing, possessing, or demanding, and of using force in

pursuance of it, while perhaps it would have been more

humane and kind in any person to have acted other-

wise, and not have claim'd his right. But yet a vio-

lent opposition to these rights would have been vastly

more pernicious than all the inhumanity in the use of

them. And therefore, though external rights cannot be

opposite among themselves; yet they may be opposite

to imperfect rights; but imperfect rights, though vio-

lated, give no right to force. Hence it appears, "That
 " there can never be a right to force on both sides, or
 " a just war on both sides at the same time."

Rights alienable and unalienable.

VII. There is another important difference of rights, according as they are alienable, or unalienable. To determine what rights are alienable, and what not, we must take these two marks:

1st. If the alienation be within our natural power, so that it be possible for us in fact to transfer our right; and if it be so, then,

2dly. It must appear, that the power of transferring such rights may serve some valuable purpose.

By the first mark it appears, "That the right of
 " private judgment, or of our inward sentiments, is un-
 " alienable;" since we cannot command ourselves to think what either we ourselves, or any other person pleases. So are also our internal affections, which necessarily arise according to our opinions of their objects. By the second mark it appears, "That our right of serving
 " God, in the manner which we think acceptable, is
 " not alienable;" because it can never serve any valuable purpose, to make men worship him in a way which seems to them displeasing to him. The same way, a direct right over our lives or limbs is not alienable to any person; so that he might at pleasure put us to death, or maim us. We have indeed a right to hazard our lives in any good action which is of importance to the public; and it may often serve a most va-

luable end, to subject the direction of such perilous actions to the prudence of others in pursuing a public good; as soldiers do to their general, or to a council of war: and so far this right is alienable. These may serve as instances to shew the use of the two marks of alienable rights, which must both concur to make them so, and will explain the manner of applying them in other cases.

VIII. THAT we may see the foundation of some of the more important rights of mankind, let us observe, that probably nine tenths, at least, of the things which are useful to mankind, are owing to their labour and industry; and consequently, when once men become so numerous, that the natural product of the earth is not sufficient for their support, or ease, or innocent pleasure; a necessity arises, for the support of the increasing system, that such a tenour of conduct be observ'd, as shall most effectually promote industry; and that men abstain from all actions which would have the contrary effect. It is well known, that general benevolence alone, is not a motive strong enough to industry, to bear labour and toil, and many other difficultys which we are averse to from self-love. For the strengthening therefore our motives to industry, we have the strongest attractions of blood, of friendship, of gratitude, and the additional motives of honour, and even of external interest. Self-love is really as necessary to the good of the whole, as benevolence; as that attrac-

The foundation of property.

tion which causes the cohesion of the parts, is as necessary to the regular state of the whole, as gravitation. Without these additional motives, self-love would generally oppose the motives of benevolence, and concur with malice, or influence us to the same actions which malice would. "That tenour of action then, which
" would take away the stronger ties of benevolence,
" or the additional motives of honour and advantage,
" from our minds, and so hinder us from pursuing industriously that course which really increases the
" good of the whole, is evil; and we are obliged to
" shun it."

First then, the depriving any person of the fruits of his own innocent labour, takes away all motives to industry from self-love, or the nearer ties; and leaves us no other motive than general benevolence: nay, it exposes the industrious as a constant prey to the slothful, and sets self-love against industry. This is the ground of our right of dominion and property in the fruits of our labours; without which right, we could scarce hope for any industry, or any thing beyond the product of uncultivated nature. Industry will be confin'd to our present necessities, and cease when they are provided for; at least it will only continue from the weak motive of general benevolence, if we are not allowed to store up beyond present necessity, and to dispose of what is above our necessities, either in barter for other kinds of necessaries, or for the service of our friends or familys. And hence appears the right which men have to lay up for

the future, the goods which will not be spoiled by it; of alienating them in trade; of donation to friends, children, relations: otherwise we deprive industry of all the motives of self-love, friendship, gratitude, and natural affection. The same foundation there is for the right of disposition by testament. The presumption of disposition is the ground of the right of succession to the intestate.

The external right of the miser to his useless hoards is founded also on this, that allowing persons by violence, or without consent of the acquirer, to take the use of his acquisitions, would discourage industry, and take away all the pleasures of generosity, honour, charity, which cease when men can be forced to these actions. Besides, there is no determining in many cases, who is a miser, and who is not.

Marriage must be so constituted as to ascertain the offspring; otherways we take away from the males one of the strongest motives to public good, viz. natural affection; and discourage industry, as has been shewn above.

Right of marriage.

The labour of each man cannot furnish him with all necessarys, tho' it may furnish him with a needless plenty of one sort: hence the right of commerce, and alienating our goods; and also the rights from contracts and promises, either to the goods acquir'd by others, or to their labours.

Commerce.

The great advantages which accrue to mankind from unprejudiced arbitrators, empower'd to decide the contro-

Right of civil government.

versys which ordinarily arise, through the partiality of self-love, among neighbours; as also from prudent directors, who should not only instruct the multitude in the best methods of promoting the public good, and of defending themselves against mutual or foreign injuries; but also be arm'd with force sufficient to make their decrees or orders effectual at home, and the society formidable abroad: these advantages, I say, sufficiently shew the right men have to constitute civil government, and to subject their alienable rights to the disposal of their governors, under such limitations as their prudence suggests. And as far as the people have subjected their rights, so far their governors have an external right, at least, to dispose of them, as their prudence shall direct, for attaining the ends of their institution; and no farther.

Corollarys for comparing the degrees of virtue and vice in actions.

IX. THESE instances may shew how our moral sense, by a little reflection upon the tendencies of actions, may adjust the rights of mankind. Let us now apply the general rules laid down above*, for comparing the degrees of virtue and vice in actions, in a few corollarys besides that one already deduced †.

From ability. 1. The disappointment, in whole, or in part, of any attempt, good or evil, if it be occasion'd only by external force, or any un-

* See sect. iii. art. 11, 12.

† See sect. iii. art. 15. Par 3.

foreseen accident, does not vary the moral good or evil; for as in good attempts, the moment of good is diminish'd or vanishes in such a case, so does the ability likewise: the quotient then may still be the same. This holds equally in evil attempts. So that actions are not to be judg'd good or evil by the events, any farther than they might have been foreseen by the agent in evil attempts; or were actually intended, if they were good, in good actions; for then only they argue either love or hatred in the agent.

2. Secular rewards annexed to virtue, *Interest.* and actually influencing the agent farther than his benevolence would, diminish the moral good as far as they were necessary to move the agent to the action, or to make him do more good than otherwise he would have done; for by increasing the interest, to be subtracted, they diminish the benevolence. But additional interests, which were not necessary to have moved the agent, such as the rewards of a good being for actions which he would have undertaken without a reward, do not diminish the virtue. In this, however, no mortal is capable of judging another: nor do the prospects of grateful returns for benefits which we would have conferred gratuitously, diminish the generosity. This corollary may be applyed to the rewards of a future state, if any person conceives them distinct from the pleasures of virtue itself: if they be not conceived as something distinct from those pleasures, then the vo-

ry desire of them is a strong evidence of a virtuous disposition.

3. External advantage exciting us to actions of evil tendency to others, if without this prospect of advantage we would not have undertaken them, diminishes the evil of the action; such as the prospects of great rewards, of avoiding tortures, or even the uneasy solicitations of violent selfish passions. This is commonly called the greatness of temptation. The reason of this is the same with that in the former case. We may here also remember again, that we are more uneasy upon the presence of pain, than upon the absence of good; and hence torture is a more extenuating circumstance than bribes, engaging us to evil, because the motives of private interest are greater.

Detriment. 4. The surmounting the uneasy solicitations of the selfish passions, increases the virtue of a benevolent action, and much more worldly losses, toil, &c. for now the interest becomes negative; the subtraction of which increases the quantity.

5. A malicious action is made the more odious by all its foreseen disadvantages to the agent, for the same reason: particularly,

Knowledge of laws, how it affects actions. 6. The knowledge of a law, prohibiting an evil action, increases the evil by encreasing the negative interest to be subtracted; for then the ill-natur'd inclination must be so strong as to surmount all the selfish motives from the penaltys, and all the mo-

tives of gratitude toward the law-giver. This is commonly call'd sinning against conscience.

7. Offices of no toil or expence have little virtue generally, because the ability is very great, and there is no contrary interest surmounted.

8. But the refusing of them may be very vitious, as it argues an absence of good affection, and often produces a great enough moment of natural evil. And,

9. In general, the fulfilling the perfect rights of others has little virtue in it: for thereby no new moment of good is produced; and the interest engaging to the action is very great, even the avoiding all the evils of war in a state of natural liberty, or the penalties of law in civil society.

Degree of right.

10. But the violating perfect, or even external rights, is always exceedingly evil, either in the immediate, or more remote consequences of the action; and the selfish motives, surmounted by this vitious inclination, are the same with those in the former case.

11. The truest matter of praise are those actions or offices, which others claim from us by an imperfect right; and generally, the stronger their right is, there is the less virtue in fulfilling it, but the greater vice in violating it.

A stronger and less extensive tie of benevolence, in equal abilitys, must produce a greater moment of good to the object of it, in equally good characters, than the weaker ties. Thus, natural affection, gratitude, friendship, have greater ef-

Strength of ties.

fects than general benevolence: or, we do more good to friends, children, benefactors, than to persons under no special relation.

12. In equal moments of good produced by two agents, when one acts from general benevolence alone, and the other from a nearer tie; there is greater virtue in the agent, who produces equal good from the more extensive, but less passionate attachment; and less virtue, where there is the more violent, or passionate attachment, which yet produces no more. The general benevolence appears of itself a more amiable principle, according to the constitution of our moral sense,* than any particular passion.

13. But the omission of the good offices of the stronger ties, or actions contrary to them, have greater vice in them, than the like omissions, or actions, con-

* See Sect. 3. Art. ix. The author all along supposes, that no man acts without some desire, or instinct, or affection, or appetite; that of these attachments of the will, some are calm and unpassionate, others are passionate; some are extensive, and others confined to one, or to a few. The former sort in each of these divisions, manifestly appears more amiable; and consequently, *cæteris paribus*, the virtue is less, in any given quantity, of good done from the violent, passionate, and narrow attachment. A certain remarker thence argues, "That then the virtue is highest, when there is no desire, affection, or attachment at all; or when we act solely from reason, without any affection to any thing." One may retort this reasoning in a like case. In any given momentum of bodies, there the velocity is greater, where there is least matter; consequently, it is there greatest, where there is no matter at all.

trary to the weaker ties ; since our selfishness or malice must appear the greater, by the strength of the contrary attachment which it surmounts. Thus, in cooperating with gratitude, natural affection, or friendship, we evidence less virtue in any given moment of good produced, than in equally important actions of general benevolence : but ingratitude to a benefactor, negligence of the interests of a friend or relation, or returns of evil offices, are vastly more odious, than equal negligence, or evil offices toward strangers.

14. When we cannot at once follow two different inclinations of benevolence, we are to prefer gratifying the stronger inclination ; according to the wise order of nature, which has constituted these attachments. Thus, we are rather to be grateful than liberal ; rather serve a friend, or kinsman, than a stranger of only equal virtue, when we cannot do both.

What offices to be preferred, when there appears any opposition.

15. Or, more generally, since there can be no right, claim, or obligation to impossibilities ; when two actions to be done by any agent, would both tend to the good of mankind, but they cannot be performed both at once ; that which occasions most good is to be done, if the omission of the other occasions no prepotent evil. If the omission of either will occasion some new natural evil, that is to be omitted, whose omission will occasion the least evil. Thus if two persons of unequal dignity be in danger, we are to relieve the more

valuable, when we cannot relieve both. Ingratitude, as it evidences a worse temper than neglect of beneficence; so it raises worse sentiments in the benefactor, and greater diffidence, and suspicion of his fellow-creatures, than an omission of an act of beneficence: we ought therefore to be grateful, rather than beneficent, when we cannot (in any particular case) evidence both dispositions. If omitting of one action will occasion new positive evil, or continuance in a state of pain, whereas the omission of another would only prevent some new positive good; since a state of pain is a greater evil, than the absence of good, we are to follow compassion, rather than kindness; and relieve the distressed, rather than increase the pleasures of the easy; when we cannot do both at once, and other circumstances of the objects are equal. In such cases, we should not suppose contrary obligations, or dutys; the more important office is our present duty, and the omission of the less important inconsistent office at present, is no moral evil.

The original of government. X. From art. vii. it follows, "That
 " all human power or authority, must
 " consist in a right transferred to any
 " person or council, to dispose of the
 " alienable rights of others; and that consequently,
 " there can be no government so absolute, as to have
 " even an external right to do or command every
 " thing." For where-ever any invasion is made upon
 unalienable rights, there must arise either a perfect, or

external right to resistance. The only restraints of a moral kind upon subjects in such cases, are, when they foresee that, thro' their want of force, they shall probably by resistance occasion greater evils to the public, than those they attempt to remove; or when they find that governors, in the main very useful to the public, have by some unadvised passion, done an injury too small to overbalance the advantages of their administration, or the evils which resistance would in all likelihood occasion; especially when the injury is of a private nature, and not likely to be made a precedent to the ruin of others. Unalienable rights are essential limitations in all governments.

Absolute government.

But by absolute government, either in prince or council, or in both jointly, we understand a right to dispose of the natural force, and goods of a whole people, as far as they are naturally alienable, according to the prudence of the prince, council, or of both jointly, for the public good of the state, or whole people; without any reservation as to the quantity of the goods, manner of levying, or the proportion of the labours of the subject, which they shall demand. But in all states this tacit trust is presupposed, "That the power conferred shall be employed according to the best judgment of the rulers for the public good." So that, whenever the governors openly profess a design of destroying the state, or act in such a manner as will necessarily do it; the

essential trust, supposed in all conveyance of civil power, is violated, and the grant thereby made void.

Limited government.

A prince, or council, or both jointly, may be variously limited; either when the consent of the one may be necessary to the validity of the acts of the other; or when, in the very constitution of this supreme power, certain affairs are expressly exempted from the jurisdiction of the prince, or council, or both jointly: as when several independent states uniting, form a general council, from whose cognizance they expressly reserve certain privileges, in the very formation of this council; or when, in the very constitution of any state, a certain method of election of the person of the prince, or of the members of the supreme council, is determined, and the intention of their assembling declared. In all such cases, it is not in the power of such prince, council, or both jointly, to alter the very form of government, or to take away that right which the people have to be governed in such a manner, by a prince or council thus elected, without the universal consent of the very people who have subjected themselves to this form of government. So that there may be a very regular state, where there is no universal absolute power, lodged either in one person, or council, or in any other assembly beside that of the whole people associated into that state. To say, that upon a change attempted in the very form of the government, by the supreme power, the people have no remedy according to the constitution itself,

will not prove that the supreme power has such a right; unless we confound all ideas of right with those of external force. The only remedy indeed in that case, is an universal insurrection against such perfidious trustees.

Despotic power, is that which persons injured may acquire over those criminals, whose lives, consistently with the public safety, they may prolong, that by their labours they may repair the damages they have done; or over those who stand obliged to a greater value, than all their goods and labours can possibly amount to. This power itself is limited to the goods and labours only of the criminals or debtors; and includes no right to tortures, prostitution, or any rights of the governed which are naturally unalienable; or to any thing which is not of some moment toward repair of damage, payment of debt, or security against future offences. The characteristic of despotic power, is this, "That it is solely intended for the good of the governors, without any tacit trust of consulting the good of the governed." Despotic government, in this sense, is directly inconsistent with the notion of civil government.

The nature of despotic power.

From the idea of right, as above explained, we must necessarily conclude, "That there can be no right, or limitation of right, inconsistent with, or opposite to the greatest public good." And therefore in cases of extreme necessity, when the state cannot otherwise be preserved from ruin, it must certainly be just

and good in limited governors, or in any other persons who can do it, to use the force of the state for its own preservation, beyond the limits fixed by the constitution, in some transitory acts, which are not to be made precedents. And on the other hand, when an equal necessity to avoid ruin requires it, the subjects may justly resume the powers ordinarily lodged in their governors, or may counteract them. This privilege of flagrant necessity we all allow in defence of the most perfect private rights: and if public rights are of more extensive importance, so are also public necessities. These necessities must be very grievous and flagrant, otherwise they can never overbalance the evils of violating a tolerable constitution, by an arbitrary act of power, on the one hand; or by an insurrection, or civil war, on the other. No person, or state can be happy, where they do not think their important rights are secure from the cruelty, avarice, ambition, or caprice of their governors. Nor can any magistracy be safe, or effectual for the ends of its institution, where there are frequent terrors of insurrections. Whatever temporary acts therefore may be allowed in extraordinary cases; whatever may be lawful in the transitory act of a bold legislator, who without previous consent should rescue a slavish nation, and place their affairs so in the hands of a person or council, elected or limited by themselves, that they should soon have confidence in their own safety, and in the wisdom of the administration; yet, as to the fixed state which should ordinarily obtain in

all communities, since no violent usurper of government can so demonstrate his superior wisdom or goodness to the satisfaction or security of the governed, as is necessary to their happiness; this must follow, "That except when men, for their own interest, or out of regard to a public good, have by consent subjected their actions, or their goods, within certain limits to the disposal of others; no mortal can have a right from his superior wisdom, or goodness, or any other quality, to give laws to others without their consent, express or tacit; or to dispose of the fruits of their labours, or of any other right whatsoever." And therefore superior wisdom, or goodness, gives no right to men to govern others.

Divine government founded on wisdom and goodness.

But then with relation to the Deity, supposed omniscient and benevolent, and secure from indigence, the ordinary cause of injuries toward others; it must be amiable in such a being, to assume the government of weak, inconstant creatures, often misled by selfishness; and to give them laws. To these laws every mortal should submit from public love, as being contrived for the good of the whole, and for the greatest private good consistent with it; and every one may be sure, that he shall be better directed how to attain these ends by the divine laws, than by his own greatest prudence and circumspection. Hence we imagine, "That a good and wise God must have a perfect right to govern the uni-

"verse; and that all mortals are obliged to universal
"obedience."

The justice of the Deity is only a con-
*Divine jus-*ception of his universal impartial bene-
*tice what.*volence, as it shall influence him, if he
gives any laws, to attemper them to the universal good,
and enforce them with the most effectual sanctions of
rewards and punishments.

Creation not the XI. Some imagine that the pro-
*ground of God's*perty the Creator has in all his
*dominion.*works, must be the true foundation
of his right to govern. Among men

indeed, we find it necessary for the public good, that
none should arbitrarily dispose of the goods acquired
by the labour of another, which we call his property;
and hence we imagine that creation is the only founda-
tion of God's dominion. But if the reason * of esta-
blishing the rights of property does not hold against a
perfectly wise and benevolent being, I see no reason why
property should be necessary to his dominion. Now
the reason does not hold: for an infinitely wise and
good being could never employ his assumed authority
to counteract the universal good. The tie of gratitude
is stronger indeed than bare benevolence; and there-
fore supposing two equally wise and good beings, the
one our Creator, and the other not, we should think
ourselves more obliged to obey our Creator. But sup-

* See art. 10. par. 6. of this section.

posing our Creator malicious, as some ancient heretics did, and a good being condescending to rescue us, or govern us better, with sufficient power to accomplish his kind intentions; his right to govern would be perfectly good. But this is rather matter of curious speculation than use; since both titles of benevolence and property concur in the one only true Deity, as far as we can know, joined with infinite wisdom and power.

XII. If it be here inquired, *Our moral sense the effect of the divine goodness.* "Could not the Deity have given us a different or contrary determination of mind, viz. to approve actions upon another foundation than benevolence?" There seems nothing in this surpassing the natural power of the Deity. But, as in the first treatise*, we resolved the constitution of our present sense of beauty into the divine goodness, so with much more obvious reason may we ascribe the present constitution of our moral sense to his goodness. For if the Deity be really benevolent, and desires the happiness of others, he could not rationally act otherwise, or give us a moral sense upon another foundation, without counteracting his own benevolent intentions. For even upon the supposition of a contrary sense, every rational being must still have been solicitous in some degree about his own external happiness: reflection on the circumstances of mankind in this world would have suggested, that uni-

* Sect. viii. art. 2. prop. 5.

versal benevolence, and a social temper, with a suitable course of actions, would most effectually promote the external good of every one, according to the reasonings of Cumberland and Puffendorf; while at the same time this perverted sense of morality would have made us uneasy in such a course, and inclined us to the quite contrary, viz. barbarity, cruelty, and fraud; and universal war, according to Mr. Hobbes, would really have been our natural state; so that in every action we must have been distracted by two contrary principles, and perpetually miserable, and dissatisfy'd, when we followed the directions of either.

Whence this universal opinion of the divine goodness.

XIII. It has often been taken for granted in these papers, "That the Deity is morally good;" tho' the reasoning is not at all built upon this supposition. If we inquire into the reason of the great agreement of mankind in this opinion, we shall perhaps find no demonstrative arguments *à priori*, from the idea of an independent being, to prove his goodness. But there is abundant probability, deduced from the whole frame of nature, which seems, as far as we know, plainly contrived for the good of the whole; and the casual evils seem the necessary concomitants of some mechanism designed for prepollent good. Nay, this very moral sense, implanted in rational agents, to approve and admire whatever actions flow from a study of the good of others, is one of

the strongest evidences of goodness in the Author of nature.

But these reflections are not so universal as the opinion, nor are they often inculcated. What then more probably leads mankind into that opinion, is this: the obvious frame of the world gives us ideas of boundless wisdom and power in its Author. Such a being we cannot conceive indigent, and must conclude happy, and in the best state possible, since he can still gratify himself. The best state of rational agents, and their greatest and most worthy happiness, we are necessarily led to imagine must consist in universal efficacious benevolence: and hence we conclude the Deity benevolent in the most universal impartial manner. Nor can we well imagine what else deserves the name of perfection more than benevolence, and those capacitys or abilitys which are necessary to make it effectual; such as wisdom and power: at least we can have no more lovely conception of it.

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